
Helena Area Coordination Plan

Fiscal Year 2015

Submitted to
Montana Department of Transportation
March 3, 2014

Prepared by the
Helena Transportation Advisory Council



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Date Accepted by the Helena City Commission

This plan is scheduled for acceptance at the February 24th, 2014 City Commission of Helena, based on the recommendation of the Helena Transportation Advisory Council (HTAC). Minutes from the HTAC and Helena City Commission Meeting showing these actions are included in the HATS Grant Application package.

This coordination plan will be reviewed and modified as necessary and updated annually.



1 Introduction

This coordination plan as required by the federal 2012 MAP-21 legislation and the Montana Department of Transportation provides a summary of current and anticipated coordination efforts in the Helena area. All transportation providers and related agencies in the greater Helena area are open to any and all coordination efforts that can lead to the maximization of the effectiveness and efficiency of the investment of local dollars in providing transportation services to the people who work in, live in, or visit the area.

In 2013 the Helena community completed two major transit planning efforts that heavily influence the coordinated plan for Fiscal Year 2015:

- The City of Helena accepted the 2013-2018 Transportation Development Plan (TDP) Update. The Helena Transportation Advisory Council is committed to assisting the City of Helena in implementing the components of the five year plan.
- Lewis & Clark County partnered with the Helena Area Transit Service (HATS) and the HTAC to complete the Helena Area Inclusive Transit Planning (HITP) Grant Phase 1 activities. The County has applied for a second phase of funding which, if awarded, will allow HTAC and HATS to take on a number of key activities in the remainder of FY 2014 and into FY 2015 that will continue to engage people with mobility limitations in transit planning and improve the HATS system for all.

The HATS TDP focused primarily on community needs within the City of Helena and the activities that HATS can complete at or near current funding levels. The HITP project looked at needs of people with mobility limitations both within and beyond the city limits, and at bringing stakeholder organizations together to create a strong voice for the transportation needs of Helena area citizens who cannot drive to access work, educational, social and recreational opportunities, and essential services like health care. Both projects found strong community support for transportation options like transit and walking, as well as for continuing to improve the HATS service.

Over the next Fiscal Year HTAC has committed to working with HATS to implement the objectives and activities of both the TDP and the Inclusive Planning Grant. The ability to achieve key goals and objectives and execute activities will depend on success in obtaining Round 2 HITP Grant funds, securing and effectively spending down all available 5311 grant funds, as well as, securing additional funding.



1.1 Transportation Development Plan (TDP) Goals

The TDP put forward an implementation plan focused on helping achieve the HATS 2020 Vision Statement and three overarching goals. The vision statement and goals reflect the fact that HATS is at a significant stage of its growth as a public transportation provider.

A major focus of the TDP was to explore the potential for HATS to take the next steps to evolve from a safety net service into a broader community service. Public and stakeholder input as well as system analysis all indicate that both HATS and the Helena area community are ready to take these steps. To meet this challenge, management will need to be creative and will need to engage the community to expand its resources and ensure that opportunities are not missed.

HATS Mission Statement

Helena Area Transit Service provides quality transportation options to access work, education, service, and recreational opportunities.

2018 Vision

HATS will continue to meet the needs of those who cannot drive or cannot afford to drive, but will also be a viable option for commuters, students, and people who have the choice to ride.

TDP Goals

1. Improve performance, cost effectiveness, and community awareness (at or near current funding levels)

More people use HATS because buses run on time, community members are aware of HATS services, and high quality information about the services is easily available. Curb-to-curb service is available for those who need it, but doesn't consume too many resources that can be directed towards more effective fixed routes for everyone. Bus stops are marked with signs and schedules; some have benches and shelters. Current and potential riders, and those who assist them, can easily plan trips and find other information about services. HATS is active in Helena Valley discussions including transportation; community planning; sustainable economic development; community health; human services; and housing. Good customer service makes HATS a more convenient and more enjoyable experience, earning repeat customers.

2. Expand and evolve into a more robust service by diversifying funding sources

Helena area residents use HATS to travel to work, school, shopping and recreation. Seniors, people with disabilities, and others who are transportation disadvantaged are better served because the entire community is better served. HATS has strategically expanded routes, hours, and days of service while improving performance measures. Local funding sources have expanded beyond the City of Helena General Fund to include contributions from all

local government entities or an Urban Transportation District as well as service agreements with a variety of local entities and large employers.

3. Improve management resources and continue to practice good fiscal management

HATS is running smoothly and efficiently, enabling the business to respond to community needs and market changes. HATS procures and maintains appropriate vehicles that are safe and support quality service. Good data drives good decisions. Staff is invested in their jobs because HATS offers a positive and productive work environment.

1.2 Helena Area Inclusive Transit Planning Grant (HITP)

Lewis and Clark County was one of seventeen communities across the nation awarded Transit Planning for All grant, sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Community Living¹. The project in Lewis & Clark County focused on empowering people with mobility limitations including seniors, adults and youth with physical and/or cognitive disabilities, to be actively involved in planning and implementing coordinated transportation systems in the Helena area. The project built on the findings, recommendations and relationships developed through the five-year Transit Development Plan (TDP).

The national project sponsors tasked the local project working group, including active HTAC members, to develop a project mission, vision, and rules of engagement, which follows. These were developed specifically for this project but with the possibility of adaption in the future.

HITP Mission Statement

We believe that community stakeholders should be empowered to be actively involved in planning and implementing transportation services that are essential to their independence, community engagement, and quality of life. Transportation planning should engage people with mobility limitations who cannot drive including seniors, people with physical or cognitive disabilities, veterans, citizens with a low income, and youth.

¹ For more information see <http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=3265>



HITP Vision

Transportation services help people increase their independence, making it possible for them to go when and where they need to go.

Helena Inclusive Transit Planning Actions

- Identifying the needs of people with mobility limitations through targeted outreach, public meetings and research.
- Developing a model for inclusive transit planning.
- Recommending proposals for an inclusive, coordinated transportation system that will be sustainable within the constraints of current transit funding.
- Exploring the potential to extend coverage to areas that are not currently served.
- Exploring the potential to form a stakeholders' coalition.

Participants

Participants include HTAC members and additional community leaders representing and serving people with mobility limitations.

1.3 TDP Actions and Goals

The TDP describes one-year and five-year actions in six categories that will help HATS achieve its 2020 vision and goals. Table 1 shows the Year 1 actions from the TDP, along with a reference to the page number in the TDP and the lead organization in taking the action. The HTAC has voted to work towards completing or progressing on all Year 1 activities in Fiscal Year 2015.

Table 1: TDP Year 1 Objectives and Actions

#	Action	TDP Page Number	Lead	Inclusive Planning Activity
Objective 1	Implement service changes			
Action 1.1	Add a route and make route and schedule adjustments to improve on-time performance, better meet commuter needs, and improve safety.	11-6	HATS	X
Action 1.2	Research fare structure to direct curb-to-curb towards people who need it. ²	11-11	HTAC	X
Action 1.3	Restrict East Valley (north of East Helena) curb-to-curb service to align with demand, density, and funding sources.	11-12	HATS	
Action 1.4	Expand fixed route and ADA paratransit to 12 hours per weekday.	11-12	HATS	X

² HTAC recommends researching fare structure; at this time they do not support updating the fare structure as outlined in the TDP.

#	Action	TDP Page Number	Lead	Inclusive Planning Activity
Objective 2	Improve infrastructure			
Action 2.1	Move bus stops out of parking lots and onto roads whenever possible.	11-13	City	
Action 2.2	Establish designated stops with bus stop signs	11-13	HATS	X
Action 2.3	Begin addressing issues with bus stop infrastructure and facilities to better serve riders.	11-13	City	X
Objective 3	Implement fleet upgrades and improve maintenance supervision			
Action 3.1	Improve maintenance documentation and procedures	11-14	HATS	
Objective 4	Improve coordination with human services providers to minimize duplication of services and improve overall service to transportation disadvantaged populations.			
Action 4.1	Work with human service providers to develop strategies to coordinate services and funding to improve efficiency and service quality.	11-14	HTAC	X
Objective 5	Expand funding & partnerships to provide effective commuter service.			
Action 5.1	Engage stakeholders in TDP implementation	11-14	HTAC	X
Action 5.2	Consider developing a communications plan	11-15	HTAC	X
Action 5.3	Pursue ideas for additional revenue	11-15	HTAC	X
Objective 6	Strategically implement data management and technology to improve management capabilities as well as service to customers.			
Action 6.1	Streamline data tracking through interim improvements to spreadsheets and sampling stop-by-stop ridership	11-16	HATS	
Action 6.2	Develop an Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) plan following a systems engineering process	11-16	HATS	
Action 6.3	Implement General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS)	11-17	HATS	X
Action 6.4	Purchase and implement demand response management software	11-17	HATS	
Objective 7	Create and implement a marketing, outreach and promotion plan to significantly increase fixed route ridership by commuters and other choice riders, as well as seniors.			
Action 7.1	Replace current website with a new site that meets standards for peer services	11-17	HATS	X
Action 7.2	Improve and update maps and schedules	11-17	HATS	X
Action 7.3	Create a brochure	11-17	HATS	X
Objective 8	Continue to improve management and staffing			
Action 8.1	Improve management of curb-to-curb through policy changes and up-to-date tools	11-18	HATS	X
Action 8.2	Improve training and procedures as recommended in Maintenance & Operations Review	11-18	HATS	X



1.4 HTP Coordinating Activities

To improve transportation options in the Helena area, the Phase 1 Inclusive Transit Planning Grant project recommended activities in four areas. The Phase 2 grant application has been submitted for these 4 action areas. If this grant is awarded, lead community members will take strong action on all 4 areas. If not awarded, HTAC is committed to securing resources for and helping to implement the HTAC portion of the list.

Achieving success will require active engagement and strong leadership from people with mobility limitations and the organizations that represent or serve them. Stakeholder organizations will need to collaborate closely with HATS and one another.

Table 2: Objectives and Actions from the Inclusive Planning Project

#	Action	Related TDP Objectives	Lead
Objective 9	Strengthen the role of the Helena Transportation Advisory Council (HTAC) for coordination and mobility management activities – HTAC’s charge from Montana Department of Transportation is to coordinate. Better training and a one-year action plan could help the TAC build coordination and have a stronger voice.	Objectives 4, 5	HTAC
Action 9.1	Recruit a mobility manager to identify and implement coordination strategies. This could be funded through the city, county, or a local non-profit. This person(s) could work with human service agencies to negotiate contracts and resource sharing agreements; tap into additional financial and in-kind resource opportunities; and take the lead on implementing inclusive planning best practices.	Objectives 4, 5	HTAC
Action 9.2	Conduct a self-assessment and develop a one-year action plan to identify high priority coordination opportunities. HTAC could use available tools such as the <i>Montana Handbook for Coordination</i> (Montana Council of Developmental Disabilities) and the <i>Human Service Transportation Coordination Framework for Action</i> (National Resource Center NRC) community self-assessment tool.	Objective 4	HTAC
Action 9.3	Update the transportation inventory to document all community resources. One reference is the <i>Montana Handbook for Coordination</i> .	Objective 4	HTAC
Action 9.4	Organize a HTAC workshop to learn about successful coordination models . Potentially invite a representative from another community to give an in-person or webinar presentation to HTAC. For example, communities in Oregon and Washington offer highly successful models of well-coordinated networks of human service-public transportation providers, including a one stop contact point to reserve a ride.	Objective 4	HTAC
Action 9.5	Lead the expansion of travel training programs with partner organizations. Several organizations currently provide travel training to their constituencies. These programs can be expanded to more people with mobility limitations. Travel training programs would need to be developed in partnership between HATS and human service organizations that understand the needs of specific populations. Leadership could come from the HTAC and/or human service organizations.	Objective 4	HTAC

#	Action	Related TDP Objectives	Lead
Action 9.6	Pursue new opportunities for improving cost efficiency and generating revenue that will achieve incremental funding increases over time, (e.g. contracts for service , the state government, the Veteran's Administration, capital area parking meters, and other sources) for a Capital-west side-Fort Harrison route; longer hours; Saturday service.	Objective 5	HTAC
Action 9.7	Pursue funding from the county for North Valley and improved East Helena deviated fixed route service.	Objective 5	HTAC
Action 9.8	Work with Advocacy Coalition to inform larger policy and funding decisions (see 3.3 and 3.4). Also work with the Intergovernmental Transit Committee on these efforts.	Objectives 4, 5	HTAC
Objective 10	Form a local Consumer Council – A Consumer Council would engage consumers with mobility limitations to help identify ongoing needs and provide feedback on planning and service policy decisions.	Objectives 4, 5	TBD
Action 10.1	Non-profit organization(s) takes the lead on staffing and convening the council.	Objectives 4, 5	TBD
Objective 11	Form a "Transportation for All" Advocacy Coalition – A formal coalition would actively monitor and engage in city and county planning and policy. It would also be essential for organizing and running a campaign to secure new funding.	Objective 5	TBD
Action 11.1	Find resources through a grant or a local non-profit organization to staff, organize, and facilitate a first coalition strategic planning work session.	Objective 5	TBD
Action 11.2	Stakeholder organization leader(s) takes the lead on finding and funding a coalition coordinator , to help develop and execute a coalition strategic plan including advocacy related priorities. Areas of expertise include coalition building and strategic communications.	Objective 5	TBD
Action 11.3	Consolidate opinion and choose direction on significant funding expansion. Among the options are millage through an Urban Transportation District, city millage, gas tax, parking meters, significant statewide funding, and/or significant increase of service contracts and local business/non-profit contributions.	Objective 5	TBD
Action 11.4	Develop an action plan for implementing funding concepts. Hear from a community that has recently passed a transit funding initiative (e.g. Missoula UTD). A good national resource is the Center for Transportation Excellence: http://www.ctfe.org http://www.cfte.org/	Objective 5	TBD
Action 11.5	Organize stakeholders to actively participate in the next transportation planning activity, the Greater Helena Transportation Plan.	Objective 5	TBD



#	Action	Related TDP Objectives	Lead
Objective 12	Develop a Strategic Marketing Plan – A transit professional who specializes in marketing and who is familiar with industry best practices would be the most qualified person to develop a marketing plan and design updated branding, web page, bus stop signs, schedules, and communications materials. One recommendation is Transit Marketing LLC. http://www.transitmarketing.com	Objective 7	HTAC
Action 12.1	TAC assesses willingness of city, county or local non-profit to hire a qualified consultant to develop a marketing plan.	Objective 7	HTAC

1.5 Other Activities

In addition, HATS and HTAC are committed to supporting the continuation of the relationship between HATS, human service transportation providers, and the Lewis & Clark County Senior Transportation levy.

- For RMDC, key areas of cooperation are:
 - The coordinated Head Start program,
 - The East Valley deviated fixed route bus service,
 - Coordinated RMDC/HATS paratransit service within Helena,
 - Providing maintenance support whenever possible to RMDC.
- For Lewis & Clark County, a key coordination opportunity is to support the continuation of maximizing the L&C Senior Transportation Levy for East Valley bus operations.
- For other entities, a key coordination opportunity is to continue to build relationships that can increase community transportation opportunities and secure contracts for services that can be used for local match and help leverage all available grant funds.

2 Agencies Involved

This section provides an overview of the various transportation providers in the greater Helena area whether they are public, private, or nonprofit. Not all of the providers reviewed here are “transit” agencies in the traditional sense of the word. Rather, the various providers are agencies that serve the population potentially served by public transit.

2.1 Helena Area Transportation Service (HATS)

Helena Area Transit Service (HATS), a program of the City of Helena, offers general public curb-to-curb service, one checkpoint (fixed) route in town, and the East Valley route, which is a deviated fixed route. HATS started with its curb-to-curb service, adding the other service within the last ten years.

Within the city limits, the current Checkpoint route structure serves most of the high-density areas and major attractors except the west side and some areas south of the hospital area. Outside the city limits the East Valley bus struggles to serve a geographically large area. The Veteran’s Administration Hospital has no service, nor does the north valley.

Table 3: Summary of HATS Service (Fiscal Year 2012)

Services	Key Characteristics
HATS Weekday Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checkpoint Curb-to-curb East Valley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monday-Friday 7am-6pm \$1 million operating \$190,000 capital (new transit center) 85,550 rides
Additional Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trolley to the Trails Youth Connection Rocky Mountain senior transportation Head Start Intercity agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed hours and days of service \$0.3 million operating 21,938 rides
Total	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$1.46 million operating & capital 107,448 rides



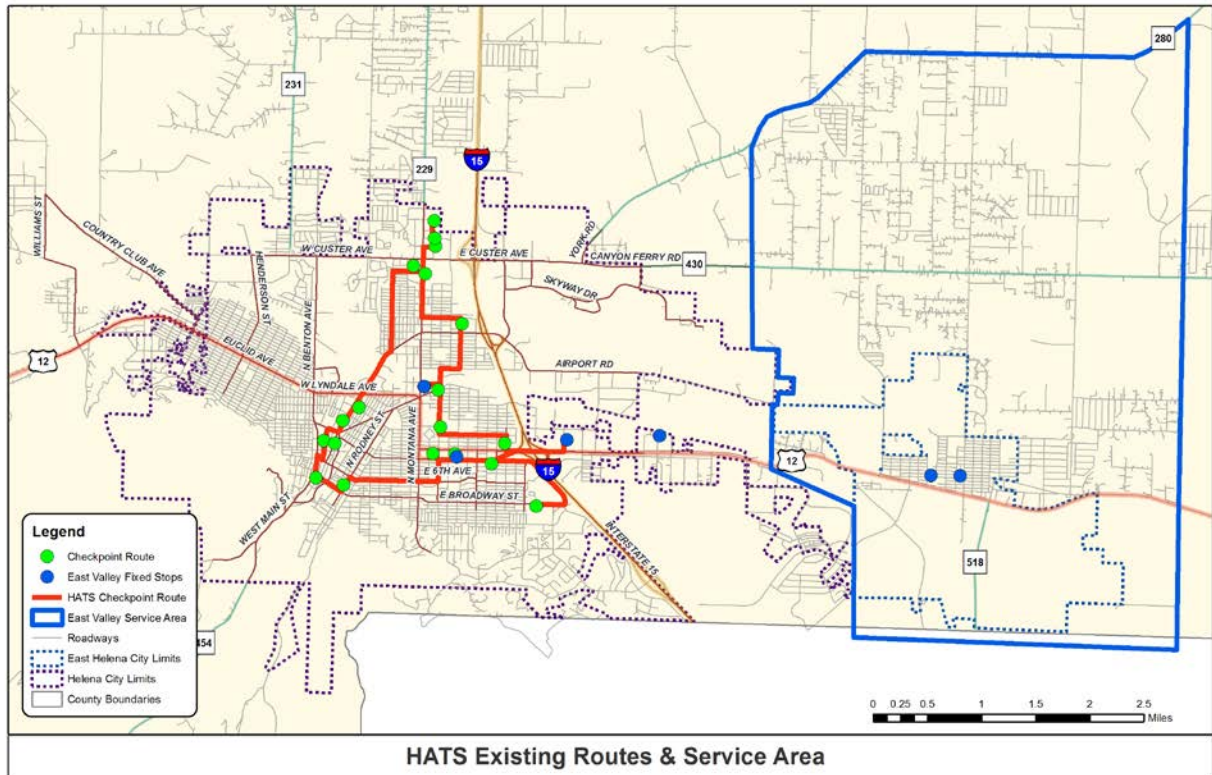


Figure 1: Checkpoint Route and East Valley Service Area

Successes, Challenges, & Opportunities

The following table summarizes the most significant issues and themes that emerged from the 2013 TDP Update.

Table 4: Successes, Challenges, and Opportunities

Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important safety net service that is highly valued by riders and supported by the community • Important community benefits • New transit center • Willing to try new things, e.g. Capital Commuter
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low use by commuters and choice riders • Lack of diversity in local funding and no state funding • High cost per ride, low boardings per hour • Poor on-time performance • Limited service availability
Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolve into broader community service while maintaining safety net

History

The City of Helena began operating Dial-a-Ride bus service within the city in 1979. Since that time, service has expanded to a checkpoint fixed route service, and a curb to curb service serving those who are unable to use other services, a combined curb to curb - fixed route service to East Helena, as well as other contracted bus service.

Description of Transportation Services

The Helena Area Transit Service, also known as HATS, is an agency within the Public Works Department of the City of Helena. The Helena Bus is one of the few city agencies physically located outside the city/county building. Its operation offices are located at 1415 North Montana Ave. As mentioned, HATS offers a variety of transportation options discussed briefly in the following section. The fleet consists of twelve buses which are equipped with wheelchair lifts, two-way radios, and all meet ADA regulations, and three Head Start school buses, which are not equipped with wheelchair lifts, but do have two way radios, and meet regulations. The Helena Area Transit Service does not operate on Federal, State, and City Holidays. There is no service on Saturday or Sunday.

Fare Schedule for all bus services

Currently, fares are established at the following rates:

- \$0.85 general public on scheduled checkpoint route, East Valley scheduled fixed route,
- \$0.85 seniors 55 years or older, person with a disability on any service
- \$1.00 general public curb to curb ride that originates or ends at checkpoint stop
- \$1.50 general public curb to curb
- Children age 6 and under ride free
- Monthly and other passes available

Checkpoint Service

In 1997, HATS began to operate the Checkpoint fixed route system. This was based upon the recommendations from the 1996 TDP. The Checkpoint system operates in a counterclockwise direction with service frequency at one hour. There are 19 checkpoint stops. The published scheduled times are fixed and are adhered to as much as possible. The Checkpoint service operates from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The service starts and ends at the HATS Transit Center at 1415 North Montana Ave.

Curb-to-Curb Service

The Curb-to-Curb service is available to anyone within the Helena city limits. Rides are available Monday through Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. As the name implies, rides are arranged by calling and scheduling service. Per current policy, rides are required to be booked 24 hours in advance, but no more than 48 hours in advance. While this policy is enforced as much as possible, there are circumstances where riders are in need of transportation that does not fit within transportation guidelines. HATS tries to accommodate these special circumstances



and make a reasonable effort to provide service on the same-day. The Curb-to-Curb bus also has a number of “standing reservation” requests for weekly service.

Once a scheduled reservation is made, the passenger(s) is picked up at the curb in front of their originating location and within a half-hour of pick up, they are dropped at the curb in front of their destination. It is essential to have experienced drivers and dispatchers to keep the fluidity of the bus schedule. The drivers and dispatchers must have a thorough knowledge of the Helena street network, including street names and address ranges. Furthermore, this system demands a great deal of organization in order to most efficiently sequence passenger pick-ups and drop-offs. Drivers are given the latitude to use their own judgment to change the dispatcher’s sequence based upon general experience and the driving conditions at that particular time. The greatest demand and need for flexibility are seen during the winter months when snow and cold temperatures create hazardous conditions.

East Valley Service

The East Valley service functions as a combined fixed route and partial curb-to-curb bus service connecting the HATS Transit Center, East Valley, East Helena, Prerelease Center, Walmart, Capitol Hill Mall, and downtown Helena. The service began operating in 2006, and has averaged nearly 1,500 trips per month. Service is provided from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. If a transfer to the checkpoint service is needed, passengers are not required to pay an additional fare to ride the checkpoint bus. If a transfer is to a pre-scheduled Curb-to-Curb bus there will be an additional fare.

Trolley

The Helena Trolley route was discontinued in FY2011 due to budget constraints. This bus can be rented for special occasions through the Downtown BID.

Capital Commuter

The Capital Commuter bus service was a demonstration project for FY 2009. The bus provided 9,600 rides for the State Capital Employees. Unfortunately due to budget constraints this project was discontinued.

Service Contracts

HATS, also provides transportation services for RMDC’s Head Start program. The Head Start bus provides approximately 104 rides per day for 51 Head Start participants 130 days of the year. The RMDC, Inc. Head Start is federally funded and may provide transportation for participation families, either in-house or through a contract for services. The federal program provides 80 percent of the funds needed to operate the local program, with a required 20 percent local match. Federal safety requirement changes passed in 2001, instituted strict new requirements for the vehicles used to transport Head Start children. Although all Head Start vehicles are in compliance with current regulations, remaining compliant with changing regulations is an ongoing process.

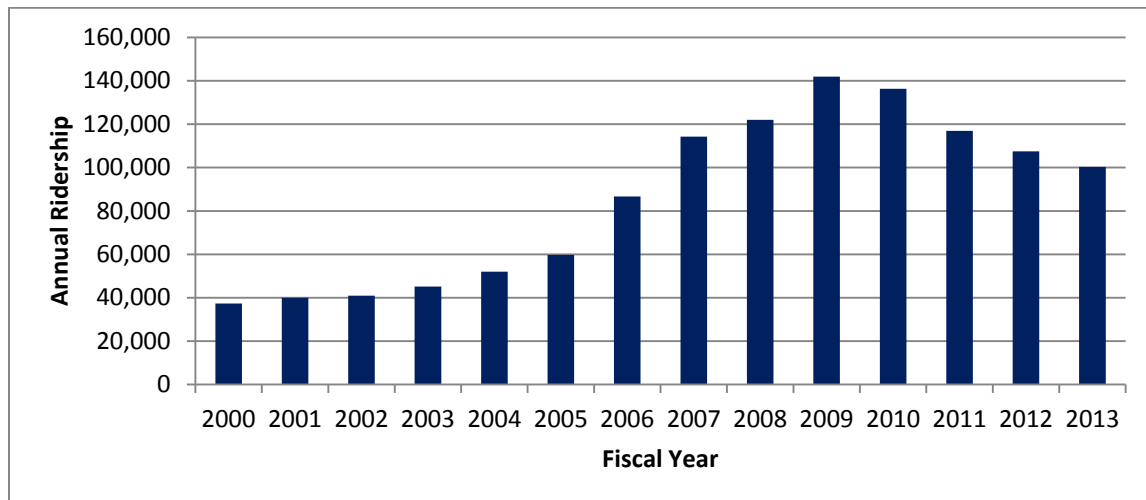
Current Staffing

Currently, HATS employs one Supervisor, one Administrative Assistant, six full-time Drivers, four part-time Drivers, one Head Start Drivers, and six on-call Drivers. Fleet maintenance is done through the City Public Works Fleet Maintenance Division.

Ridership Patterns

The Transit Development Plan included an assessment of ridership and levels of service, as well as a peer comparison. The following includes some of the data from the plan.

Statistics for HATS are kept on an annual basis. Over the twelve-year period that HATS has used its current system of tracking ridership data, the system has seen fluctuations in the number of riders (Figure 2). Ridership increased steadily from 2000 until 2009. The number of passengers increased as the addition of the Trolley, the East Valley service, the Capital Commuter service, and Head Start were incorporated as part of the HATS system. Since 2010 the ridership has seen a decrease. HATS Administrators believe the decrease is caused in part by the elimination of the Commuter Route and Trolley Route. Numerous community surveys by different agencies express an increased desire and need for more public transportation opportunities.

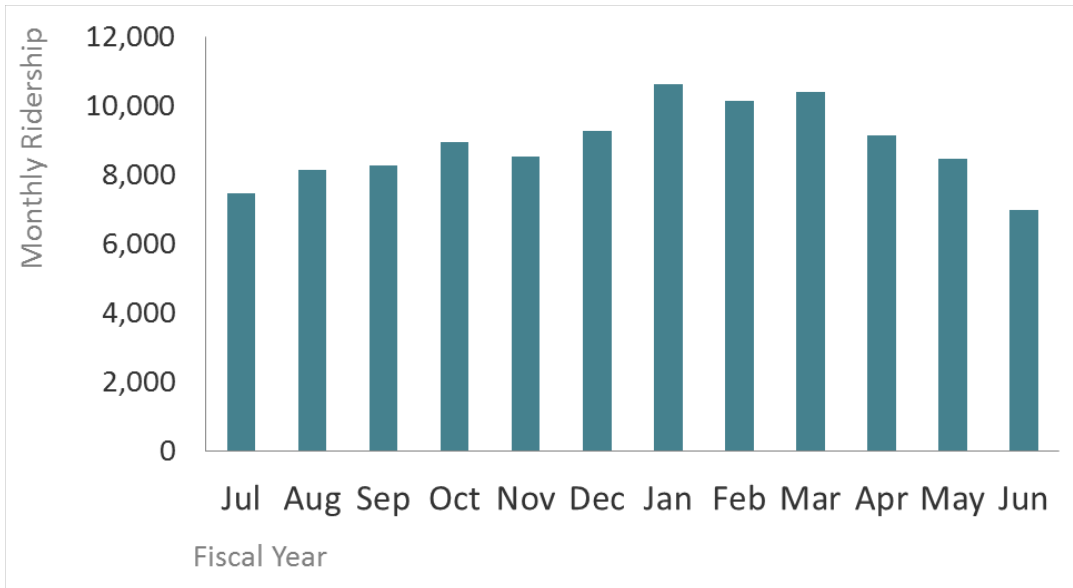


Source: HATS ridership records

Figure 2: Ridership over time

Ridership tracked by month for fiscal year 2012 shows heaviest usage of HATS during winter months. This comparison is shown in Figure 3.





Source: HATS ridership records

Figure 3: Ridership by month for FY 2012

Current Year Ridership Characteristics

A review by route of ridership from fiscal year 2012 shows that Checkpoint and Curb-to-Curb carry the same number of passengers. However, when considering only weekday services³, 39% of the miles are in Curb-to-Curb, an indicator of the high cost of this type of service.

Ridership by Route

FY 2012

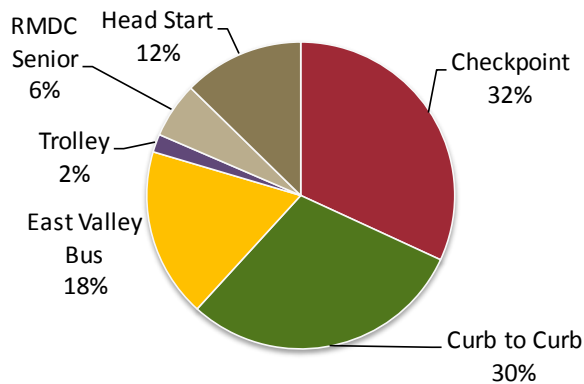


Figure 4: Ridership by route, Fiscal Year 2012

³ Weekday services are Checkpoint, Curb to Curb, and East Valley. Additional services include Trolley, RMDC Senior, and Head Start.

Miles by Route

FY 2012

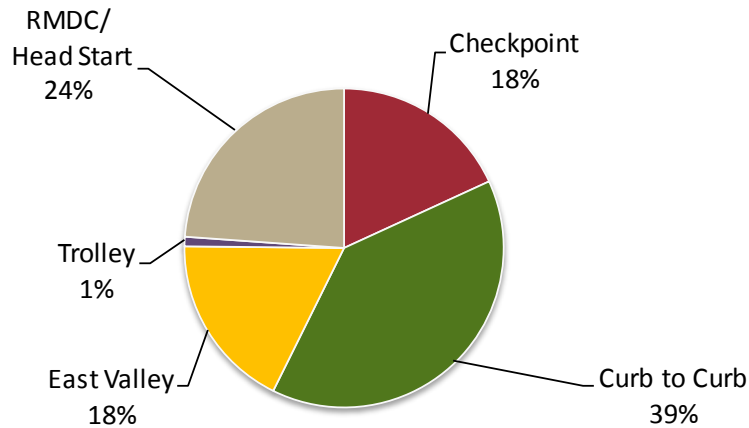


Figure 5: Miles by route, Fiscal Year 2012

Figure 6 describes boardings by time of day for the Checkpoint route. Data was not available for East Valley or Curb-to-Curb. Ridership is highest at the beginning of the day the remains constant until the last hour, when people are heading home. Lower ridership in the last hour is typical for most transit services.

Figure 7 shows the average number of boardings per day for the Checkpoint route.

Ridership by Time of Day

FY 2012 Checkpoint Daily Average

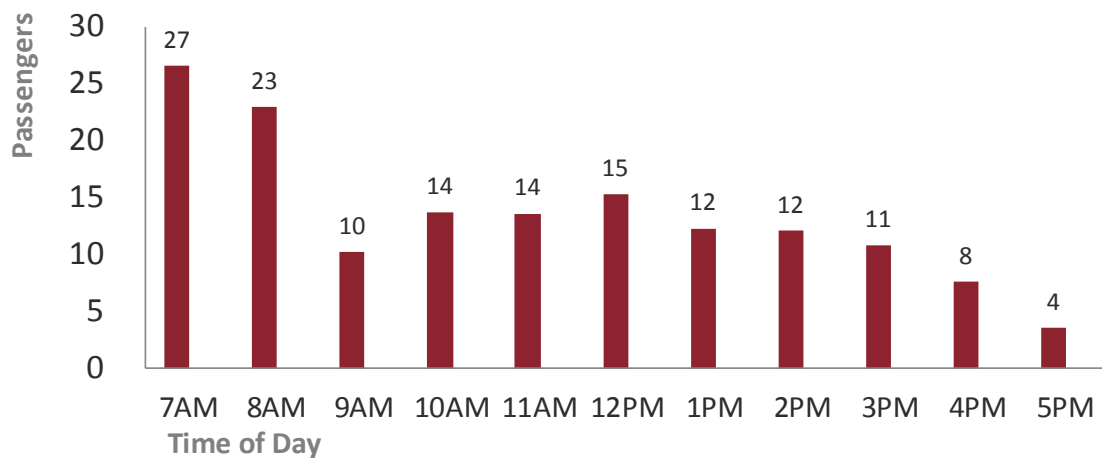


Figure 6: Boardings by Hour of Day



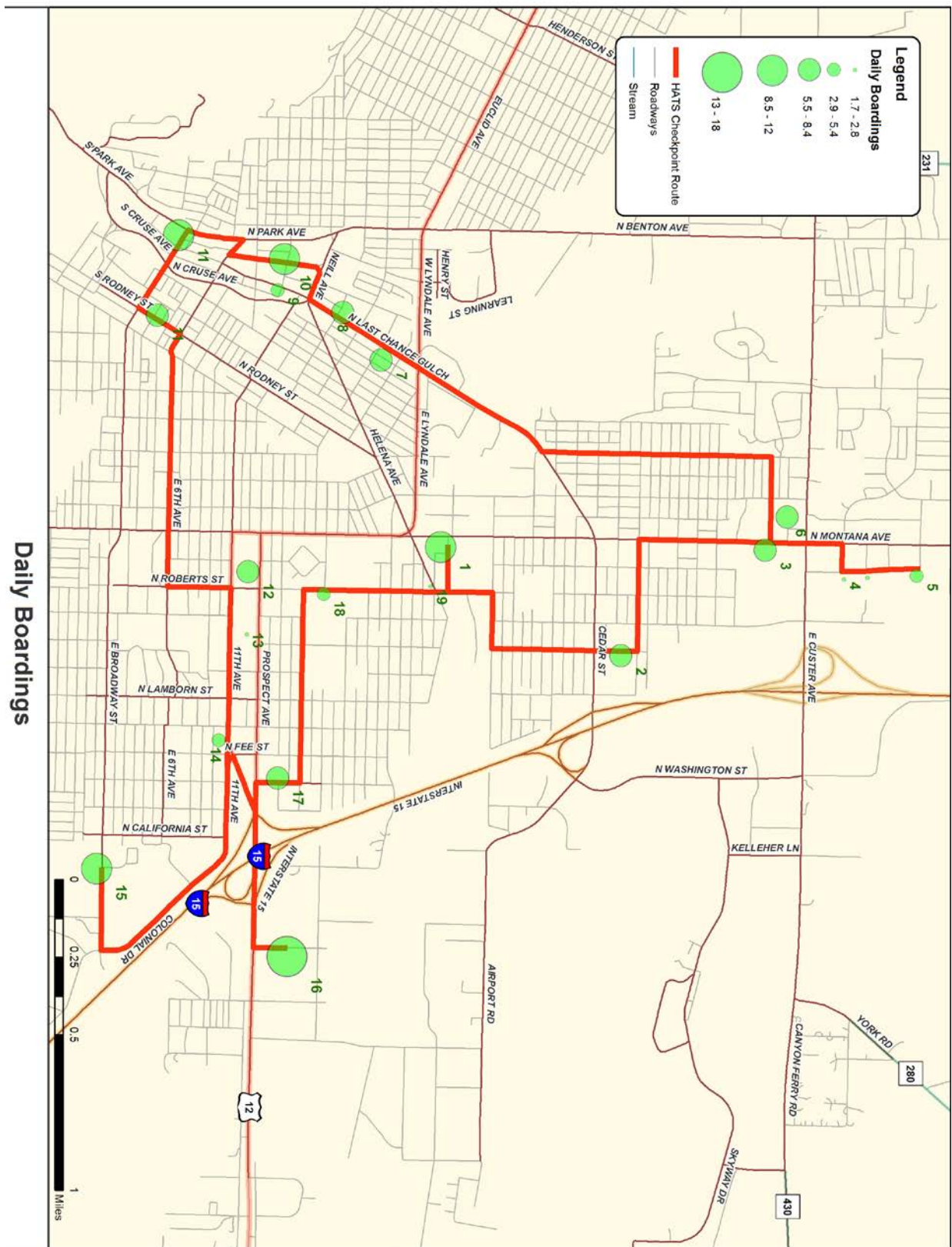


Figure 7: Passenger Boardings - Checkpoint

Vehicle Fleet

HATS currently have twelve vehicles in its fleet (eleven buses and one trolley), all of which are equipped with two-way mobile radios. All of the HATS vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts and are able to accommodate at least two passengers in wheelchairs.

Table 5: HATS Vehicle Inventory

Year	Vehicle	Seating	Condition
(1) 2012	Body-on-Chassis	23 pass or 2 wheelchairs	Excellent
(1) 2011	Body-on-Chassis	23 pass or 2 wheelchairs	Excellent
(2) 2010	Body-on-Chassis	12 pass or 5 wheelchairs	Excellent
(2) 2007	Body-on-Chassis	24 pass or 2 wheelchairs	Good/Poor
(1) 2006	Body-on-Chassis	17 pass or 2 wheelchairs	Excellent
(1) 2005	Body-on-Chassis	17 pass or 2 wheelchairs	Good/Poor
(1) 2004	Body-on-Chassis	12 pass or 2 wheelchairs	Good/Poor
(1) 2003	Body-on-Chassis	17 pass or 3 wheelchairs	Good/Poor
(1) 2003	Body-on-Chassis	17 pass or 3 wheelchairs	Poor
(1) 2003	Trolley	26 pass or 3 wheelchairs	Excellent

Facilities

The bus storage facility located at 1415 North Montana Avenue, has an on-site mechanic, and is equipped with a full service work bay and an automated wash bay. Washing, cleaning, and fueling of buses is done by the bus drivers. Most vehicles are stored in this facility and 2 buses with gasoline engines are stored in the cold storage building.

The HATS Transit Center business area provides offices for the Transit Supervisor, staff, and dispatching personnel. The facility also has a break room, conference room, intercity bus office, operations office and storage, customer waiting, private and public restrooms.

Financial Status

Revenues

The revenues required to support the HATS operations are from a variety of funding sources. These sources are included in the following list. The number following each of the funding sources represents the percentage of total revenue. These figures represent the projected FY 2014 budget revenues. The largest resource is the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) which indicates HATS' effectiveness in attracting federal dollars into the area's economy. As shown, a total of 59 percent of the revenue is from federal sources.



Table 6: HATS Revenues

Funding Source	Amount
FTA 5311	\$706,925
County Senior Transportation	\$0
Transit System Revenues	\$67,000
Head Start Contract	\$98,351
City General Funds	\$318,215
Total Budgeted Operating Revenues	\$1,190,491

Expenses

HATS' expenditures have increased over the past few years. Expenditures budgeted for the 2014 fiscal year total \$1,112,924. The primary expenses for HATS and all other transit agencies across the United States are salaries and benefits. Operating and administration salaries and benefits represent nearly 76% of the cost of operations. Contracted services represent 6%, and other operating costs represent 18% of the total budget.. HATS' projected operating costs for 2014 are shown in the following table, which presents the FY2014 Preliminary budget.

Table 7: HATS Expenses

Category	Amount
Salaries Wages and Benefits	\$527,831
Administrative Indirect Costs/Insurance	\$315,914
Other Miscellaneous Supplies	\$21,774
Purchased Professional/Contract Services	\$67,955
Operations - Gas/Oil/Tires/Parts/Maintenance	\$179,450
Total Operating Cost	\$1,112,924

2.2 Other Transportation Providers

Montana Independent Living Project (MILP)

MILP is one of four independent living centers, all nonprofits serving the State of Montana. MILP serves 14 counties in southwestern Montana, including Lewis and Clark, Jefferson, and Broadwater Counties. MILP services are available to anyone with a disability who is likely to benefit from services. The agency's mission is to promote independence for people with disabilities. MILP provides direct services to over 450 people a year. MILP also has services for the general community including information and referral, systems advocacy, and ADA technical assistance.

The agency assists people with disabilities in assessing what their transportation needs are, and what options might be available to them. They do not directly provide any housing or transportation services; however, they do advocate for system changes that create more transportation options for people with disabilities.

- **Information And Referral** – Includes basic information on equipment, financial assistance, recreation, housing, attendant care, support groups, legal rights, and many other disability and community topics and resources.
- **Independent Living Skills Training** – Training in areas such as budgeting, socialization, leisure planning, attendant care management, and the use of community resources.
- **Peer Advocacy** – A person with a disability provides counseling and support on a one-to-one basis with another person who is experiencing personal problems related to a disabling condition.
- **Individual And Systems Advocacy** – Help persons with disabilities identify their independent living needs, develop an individual plan of action to meet those needs, share resource information, and facilitate problem-solving skills necessary for ensuring an independent and self-determined lifestyle.
- **Americans With Disabilities Act/Accessibility Technical Assistance** – Center staff provide individuals with information regarding their rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). They have a broad array of information on ADA Accessibility Guidelines, regulations, violations, how to file a complaint, and other pertinent information. They also provide advocacy services to a consumer in order to implement enforcement of ADA guidelines and perform assessments for businesses and agencies to determine compliance with ADA Accessibility Guidelines. There may be a charge for this service based on the complexity and scope of the assessment; however, assessments are provided to consumers at no cost.

Rocky Mountain Development Council (RMDC)

Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc. (RMDC) is one of the original Community Action Agencies created under the Economic Opportunity Act. The agency started as a nonprofit 501(c)(3), became a public agency under county government in 1974, and is currently operating as a nonprofit. RMDC is the sponsoring agency of numerous community programs primarily geared to helping low-income seniors, individuals, and families meet their needs. Senior programs (many of which also serve people with disabilities regardless of age), include Senior Transportation, Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, Retired and Senior Volunteers, a Senior Center, the Daily Dinner Club, Home Delivered Meals, Senior Commodities, Area Agency on Aging, Spirit of Service, and others. Participation in the Low Income Energy Assistance and Weatherization programs is predicated on income, but locally, approximately 36.5 percent of participants are seniors aged 62+, and more than half (56.3 percent) have a disability to the extent that they qualify for participation in SSI (Supplemental Security Income), a Social Security entitlement program for those with a disability too severe to work. Virtually all of those served by RMDC's low-income housing programs are seniors who also exhibit an extremely high prevalence of age-related disability.



Description of Transportation Services

Virtually all of RMDC's programs require transportation in one form or another. This includes transporting participants who are low-income, have disabilities, or are seniors to and from services or activities. RMDC also transports goods and services to a broad, low-income clientele throughout the tri-county area. RMDC's Senior Transportation System targets services to the elderly and people with disabilities. This system provides an average of 51 rides per day.

The senior transportation service caters to a number of senior programs; with one of the more popular being congregate meals or Daily Dinner Club. Between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon, one vehicle picks up seniors who attend the noon social/nutritional gathering. The Dinner Club averages 75 participants per day. Daily manifests are created for the Senior Bus and are ready at or before the start of the day. The driver is responsible for reviewing the manifest and has authority to make adjustments as needed.

RMDC is a partner in the Eagles Manor Complex, which currently includes the Eagle Manor I (with 66 one-bedroom and single-room occupancy units), Eagle Manor II (with an additional 53 units), and Eagles Manor III (additional 30 units in the common complex), which is located at 715 North Fee in Helena. These units are dedicated to low-income seniors and other adults with disabilities. The complexes are home to the frail elderly with a mean age in the 80's. Most experience age-related disabilities and need walkers, wheelchairs, and portable oxygen tanks. Few drive or have access to personal vehicles. Because of the high concentration of elderly and adults with disabilities in one location, it makes sense to provide a dedicated means of transportation to assist people with accessing shopping, doctors, and other appointments. RMDC has added this service to the Senior Transportation System.

Service Productivity

RMDC provided a total of 1,112 one-way, passenger-trips between July 2011 and June 2012 through its senior transportation system. The total operating cost for these services was \$67,514. Ridership has remained relatively stable over the past five years, although area demographics indicate that there will be a steady rise in the percentage of seniors in the population for the next 20 years, as reflected in the projected growth in the tri-county population aged 65 and older.

Senior Companions and Foster Grandparents are senior volunteer programs for low-income seniors. Volunteers receive a small hourly stipend and are reimbursed for the mileage they log in support of providing service. Senior Companions provide in-home services, transportation, and run errands for their frail elderly clients. Not only do these programs serve the specific target population noted, they also provide a strong protective factor for the impoverished senior volunteers themselves.

Service Analysis

Vehicle Fleet

RMDC's vehicle fleet is made up of 24 vehicles. The following list provides the detailed fleet information.

Table 8: RMDC Vehicle Inventory

Description	Fund Name
Non-Owned & Hired	IDC
99 Ford Econoline Van	Facility Manager
92 GMC Safari Van	Head Start-Home Base
92 GMC Safari Van	Head Start -Home Base
2008 Ford Ranger	HDM
2009 GMV Van	HDM
2007 Starcraft Bus	Sr. Transportation
2007 Starcraft Bus	Sr. Transportation
92 Dodge Panel Van (33%)	Ombudsman
92 Dodge Panel Van (33%)	Ombudsman
2006 Ford 350 Super Duty	Weatherization – Crew
2006 Ford F 350 Crew	Weatherization – Crew
1994 Titan Stock Trailer	Weatherization
1998 Cargo Mate Trailer	Weatherization
2008 Interstate Cargo Trailer	Weatherization
1993 GMC	Weatherization
2003 GMC Savanna	Weatherization—Insulation
2006 Chevy Trail Blazer	Weatherization
92 Dodge Panel Van (33%)	Wx- Operational support
2006 Chevy K 1500 Silverado (85%)	Weatherization- Auditor
2006 Chevy K 1500 Silverado (15%)	Weatherization- Auditor
2006 Ford F 150 (85%)	Weatherization- Auditor
2006 Ford F 150 (85%)	Weatherization- Auditor
1997 Ford Van (50%)	Montana Youth Homes JS
1996 Ford Aerostar (50%)	Montana Youth Homes JS

Future Needs

RMDC indicated both short-term and long-term needs. In the short-term, it is evident that bus storage facilities are needed. In the next six years, RMDC indicates it is in need of approximately \$1.18 million in capital. Long-term needs include the following:

- Extending service to outlying communities: There is extreme need for service to outlying rural areas, including White Sulpher Springs, Whitehall, Lincoln, Augusta, Basin, Boulder, Montana City, and/or Clancy. To begin with, services might be provided on a weekly basis, with the intent of establishing a transportation hub where the elderly and people with disabilities from outlying areas could access a ride into Helena, where they could connect with the Helena Area Transportation System (HATS). From there, they



could shop, attend appointments with health and other providers, or participate in senior center or other activities.

- Head Start parents consistently name transportation – particularly outside the city limits and after business hours – as one of the biggest obstacles to self-sufficiency and participation in the various Head Start opportunities. This presents a huge unmet need in the local service area.
- A 24/7 paratransit system is needed throughout the service area. This could accommodate small emergencies that did not require an ambulance. It could also serve many living at poverty levels who must take jobs that demand non-traditional hours. Without access to transportation, it is difficult to find and hold a steady job.

Table 9: RMDC Short-Term Needs

Description	Amount
Replacement cargo van for existing Home Delivered Meals Program.	\$75,000.00
Two Blue Bird Buses to replace existing Head Start Buses	\$200,000.00
Two New Head Start Transport vans @ \$50,000/Van	\$100,000.00
Bus barn to House and maintain all RMDC vehicles.	\$750,000
Transportation needs assessment specific to the low income and senior consumers	\$50,000.00
Total Estimated Short-Term Needs	\$1,175,000.00

Spring Meadow Resources

Spring Meadow Resources (SMR) is an agency devoted to serving the needs of adults with developmental disabilities. Transportation is one component of the overall operations which provide its clients with access to basic services such as shopping, recreation, social, and medical needs. Transportation is available for clients on a demand responsive basis 24 hours each day, seven days a week. HATS, is used by clients and staff as well, if within pickup/destinations if HATS covers those areas. Many of the hours of serviced needed by their clients are outside the timeframe of services provided by HATS, i.e. early mornings, evenings, and weekends. Services are needed outside the available ridership area of the public transportation system. Spring Meadow Resources occasionally provides rides to private individuals who recreate with clients, and local school and education groups for in-town trips. This information is tracked. SMR has submitted an expanded proposal to the State of Montana that proposes transporting clients living in their homes and not in services with SMR to take them to and from their day programs, Monday through Friday.

The organization currently has 104 clients, approximately 100 staff members, and a fleet of ten vehicles. The primary use of this transportation system involves daily trips to the clients' day services located throughout the Helena community. The service is also used to take clients to shopping centers, medical offices, banks, and restaurants as well as other integration trips such as to local lakes for fishing, ballgames, camping, public events, etc.

Funds for the transportation program come from the agency's overall budget. Its budget sources are contracts with the State of Montana through the State General Fund, Medicaid funds and Social Security funds.

Table 10: Spring Meadows Vehicle Inventory

Vehicle	Seating	Condition
Four Vans	6	Poor
Two Buses	12	Poor
Two SUV's	6	Poor
One Truck	3	Poor

West Mont

West Mont, established in Helena in 1973, is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization, providing a variety of services, care and support for approximately 125 individuals with developmental disabilities. With over 180 employees, West Mont operates 10 residential facilities; 4 day / work programs and provides a supported services program for challenged individuals living in their own apartments or living with their family.

Residential (Group Home / Apartments) Services include 24hr. / 7day staffing to ensure safety of the residents, assist clients with activities of daily living, provide recreational activities in the community, accompany to social events, as well as manage and escort to all medical appointments. Work / Day Programs provide agricultural, vocational and skills training in a structured environment. The focus is 'job readiness' training.

(Community based) Supported Services offer assistance with job placement in the community, on the job training at one's place of employment; and training / teaching of life skills so one may learn to be independent in their own place and reach their potential.

Description of Transportation Services

The West Mont transportation fleet is comprised of a variety of 25 vehicles, ranging from a 12-person bus to vans, trucks & passenger cars. Of those 25 vehicles 4 are equipped with wheelchair lifts for individuals with wheelchairs. Transportation services are provided to people with developmental disabilities who reside in residential facilities (group homes); individuals attending West Mont's Day / Work Programs and our Supported Services Program. Of the ten group homes, only one is outside the Helena city limits, approximately six miles east along York Road. The transportation services provide West Mont's clients access to work, social, medical, and recreational/shopping opportunities in the community and are available on a demand-responsive basis 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. West Mont averages approximately 3,500 passenger-trips per month and more than 13,000 miles of travel to serve those trips. West Mont will occasionally receive requests from families or individuals needing transportation that are not enrolled in service with West Mont. West Mont attempts to fulfill reasonable requests for



assistance with transportation. Some individuals attending West Mont's Day /Work Programs and other West Mont sponsored activities utilize HATS as well to get to these programs.

With regard to vehicle maintenance, most preventive maintenance is done in-house while other vehicle maintenance is contracted out. Large maintenance items are bid out. Vehicles are often taken to the dealerships, making use of warranty and other special maintenance offers granted at the time of vehicle purchase. Each of the vehicles listed have more than 100,000 road miles.

West Mont's transportation program funds originate in Federal and State sources. Approximately 70 percent of the dollars used to fund transportation are Federal dollars and the remaining 30 percent are from the State of Montana.

Vehicle Inventory

West Mont has a fleet of 25 vehicles as listed below:

Table 11: West Mont Vehicle Inventory

Year	Make	Model	Seating
1995	Dodge/Maint	Van 2500 W/C	2 passenger truck
1995	Dodge/L&C	W/C	8 passenger
2003	Subaru	Tara	5 passenger
2004	GMC Yukon	FT&Co.	7 passenger
2000	Dodge/WC	2500/Tara Apts	7 passenger
2003	Chevy	Bus(w/c) /Caldwell	12 passenger
2001	Dodge 2500	Townsend	8 passenger
2003	Toyota	Matrix/Blaine	4 passenger
2002	Dodge	Dakota/Blaine	2 passenger truck
1995	Chevy	2500/Farm	2 passenger truck
2005	Chevy	Van/Farm	12 passenger
2005	Chevy	3500/Tara	12 passenger
2006	Toyota	Sienna/Humbolt	7 passenger
2005	Ford	Van/HILLSIDE	12 passenger
1992	Ford	W/C/ I & C	5 passenger
2006	Toyota	Matrix/Admin	4 passenger
2007	Ford	2500/Humbolt	12 passenger
2009	Chrysler	T/C Cedar	7 passenger
2009	Chrysler	TC/Farm	7 passenger
2000	Honda	Oddessy/Blaine	7 passenger
1997	Dodge	1500/Blaine	2 passenger
2008	TOYOTA	SIENNA	7 passenger
2004	TOYOTA	SIENNA	7 passenger
2001	Chevy Truck	Maintenance	3 passenger
2000	Chevy Cube	All House	3 passenger

Intercity Bus Service

Helena and the rest of the state lost Rimrock Trailways Intercity bus service in March 2013. A second provider, Salt Lake Express, agreed to provide temporary Intercity bus service through

Helena, but in August 2013 ceased operations due to lack of success in expanding their fleet to meet this demand. The Salt Lake Express service was reinstated in February of 2014.

Previously, HATS served as the Helena intercity ticket agent. At this time, HATS will not be applying for the Intercity FTA 5311(f) program match funds. HATS is now providing space to Salt Lake Express.

When operating properly, Montana's intercity bus operators connect to other services linking to the rest of the country. In spite of Montana's remoteness and low population density of Montana, the routes hold national significance because they carry people across the country along one of only four cross-country corridors. The public and private intercity operators allow Montanans to connect to communities both within Montana and outside the state.

In summary, intercity providers operate on the following corridors that start or pass through Montana:

- The corridor between Missoula and Billings was served with three round trips a day prior to March 2013. Currently Jefferson Lines operates two round trips on I-90 through Butte. The third round trip which passed through Helena is not in operation.
- Greyhound operates two round trips connecting Missoula to Seattle.
- Jefferson Lines runs one round trip a day between Billings and Fargo, snaking between I-94 and US 2 through Miles City, Glendive, Sidney, Williston, Bismarck, and Fargo.
- Starting in December 2013 Salish Kootenai Transportation began intercity service on US 93 between Missoula and Whitefish. This service is branded as "Flathead Transit".
- Salt Lake Express is running one round trip a day on I-15 between Great Falls and Butte, with connections in Helena with timed connections to Missoula, Bozeman, Billings, and points beyond thru Butte.
- North Central Transit travels between Fort Belknap and Great Falls via Havre on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Northern Transit Interlocal runs one round trip a day between Shelby and Kalispell on Tuesdays and Wednesdays
- Northern Transit Interlocal operates two round trips a day between Shelby and Great Falls on Monday and Thursday
- Salt Lake Express runs two round trips a day on I-15 between Butte and Salt Lake City via Idaho Falls
- Arrow/Black Hills Stage Lines runs twice a day between Billings and Denver. One route runs through Lovell. The other route runs through Sheridan, Wyoming.
- Karst Stage operates intercity service between Bozeman and West Yellowstone. Salt Lake Express operates between West Yellowstone and Idaho Falls.

Greyhound, Salt Lake Express, Arrow/Black Hills Stage Lines, and Jefferson operate 365 days a year and are interlined.



3 Agencies Not Involved

In Fiscal Year 2012 HATS formally invited a broad group of human service agencies to participate in HTAC. All agencies that were approached agreed to participate except for the airport and the Salvation Army. In Fiscal Year 2013 and 2014 HTAC provided membership information at all HTAC meetings and appropriate opportunities. In Fiscal Year 2014 HTAC requested that membership information be posted on the city website.



4 Needs Assessment

In 2013 two major transit planning projects – the Transportation Development Plan (TDP) Update and the Helena Area Inclusive Transit Planning (HITP) Grant – provided an in-depth assessment of transportation needs in the Helena area. The TDP assessed needs through public outreach (Chapter 7 and Appendix B of the TDP), system analysis (Chapter 3), and demographic analysis (Chapter 2). The HITP assessed needs through interviews, small group meetings, and community meetings. A summary of findings from these methods is presented here.

4.1 Challenges Identified in TDP

Moving forward, HATS greatest challenge will be balancing the costs and benefits of Curb-to-Curb with fixed route services. Most of HATS' current challenges stem from a heavy investment in Curb-to-Curb service that costs far more per ride than fixed route service. HATS' total cost of providing curb-to-curb service is further increased by current policies that make this service available to people who are able to use fixed route service.

Low Level of Use by Choice

Riders

The results of our rider survey show that 92% of current riders do not own a car and/or cannot drive. This low level of use by commuters and other "choice riders" is a reflection of the lack of convenient fixed route service, poor on-time performance, long travel times and limited marketing.

Automobile Access

What is your primary reason for using HATS?

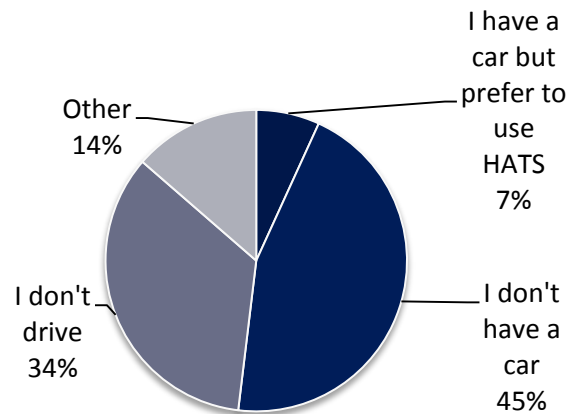


Figure 8

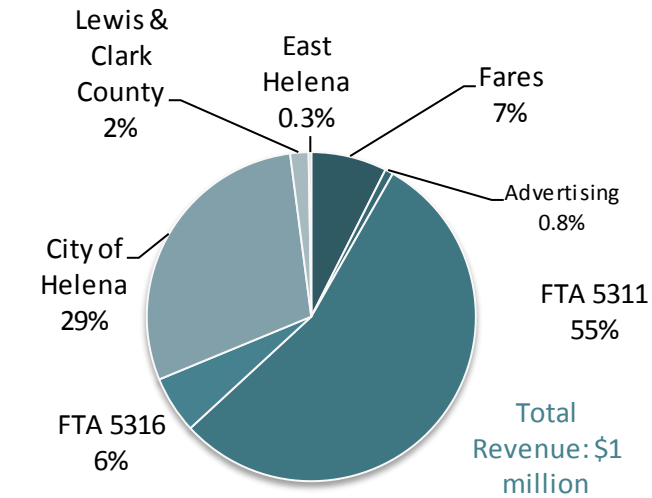
Lack of Funding Diversity

The lack of diversity in HATS local funding is a significant challenge.

The City of Helena is by far the largest local contributor.

Contributions from the City of East Helena, Lewis & Clark County, and human service agencies total less than the cost of the local portion of the East Valley route. In Montana, it is particularly important for public transportation providers to have a robust and diverse local funding base because Montana lacks a state-level funding source. In comparison, dedicated local funding and state-level funding in many other states significantly enhances the stability and capacity of many transit providers. Many top performing rural systems have much larger budgets than shown in the peer group we selected. In many cases these larger budgets are due in part to local taxing authority dedicated to public transit, as well as state funding.

Operations Funding for HATS Weekday Service* Fiscal Year 2012



*Checkpoint, Curb-to-Curb, East Valley

Figure 9

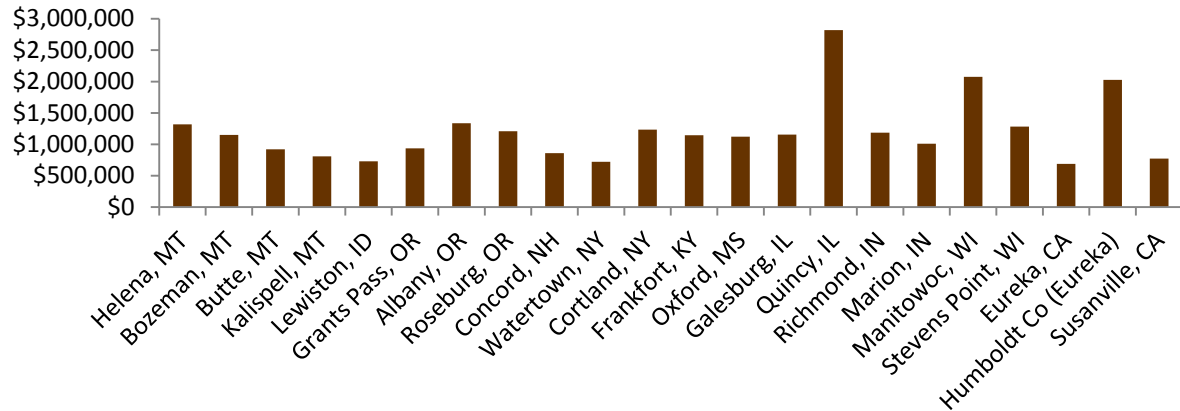
High Cost per Ride and Low Rides per Hour

As shown in the accompanying graphs and tables, HATS' budget is adequate to provide services comparable to Bozeman and Butte. However, compared to peers, HATS is providing a much smaller percent of its service miles with fixed or flex routes – 64% of HATS rides are on the high-cost curb-to-curb service. As a result, HATS is providing half as many rides per hour as Bozeman and significantly fewer than Butte.

Core Service	Cost per Ride	% Hours
Helena Checkpoint	\$6.29	21%
Helena Curb-to-Curb	\$18.28	64%
East Valley Bus:	\$9.08	15%
Overall	\$11.41	100%

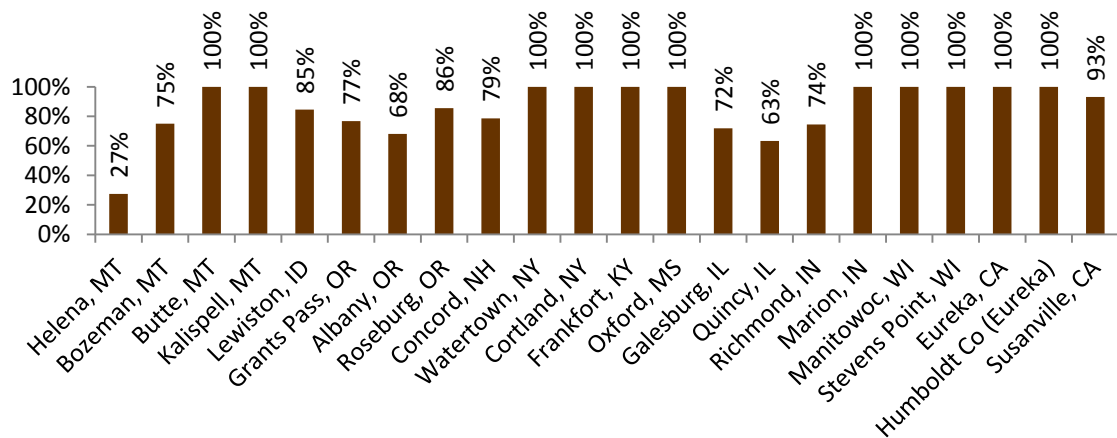
Annual Operating Budget (2010)

Helena's budget is adequate to provide services comparable to Bozeman and Butte. Many top performing rural systems have much larger budgets than shown in this group.



Percent Miles in Fixed or Flex Route Service (2010)

Peers operate primarily fixed or flex route



Communities of approximately the same population and transit budget as Helena selected from the rural National Transit Database (NTD). Potential errors, omissions, and explanation of differences: communities of similar size with much larger budgets, such as Port Washington with a \$7.9 million budget, were filtered out of these graphs. California counties often operate countywide service in addition to city services, such as peer Humboldt County, where Eureka and Arcata have city services and Humboldt Transit Authority operates county wide. Many communities meet ADA requirements through use of flex routes; some contract ADA paratransit; some may have misreported.



On-Time Performance

HATS fixed route and deviated route services perform poorly⁴ in the area of on-time performance. The Transit Capacity and Quality of Service Manual level of service ratings cover transit services in all types of communities. As a rural communities, the TDP recommended a target LOS D for Helena:

- Target Level of Service (LOS D): 80-85% on-time performance
- Actual LOS F: 49% on-time performance for Checkpoint, and 35% on-time performance for East Valley

On Time Performance (October 2012 Sample)

Buses should run at least 80% on time, never early

		Checkpoint	East Valley
Early	11 min +	0%	2%
	6-10 min	1%	10%
	1-5 min	15%	18%
	On Time 0 -5 min	49%	35%
Late	6-10 min	18%	17%
	11-15 min	11%	8%
	16 +	6%	10%

This occurs largely because the Checkpoint and East Valley routes are trying to accomplish too much with unrealistic schedules – attempting to cover too large an area with too many stops. The East Valley Bus, with its expansive service area, performs far worse than the in-town Checkpoint route. A related issue is that many riders surveyed indicated that travel times on the fixed route bus are too long to meet their needs.

Limited availability

To achieve a target LOS D, HATS should have a goal of providing fixed route service within one-quarter of a mile of 60-69% of the service area population. Currently, the Checkpoint and East Valley buses operate within a quarter-mile of only 28% of the City of Helena's population and there is no service on the west side.

Similarly, the goal for hours of service should be 12 to 13 hours of daily weekday service with some weekend service. Currently the Checkpoint route operates for 11 hours and the

No west side service

- Target LOS D: 60-69% of population served
- Actual LOS F: 28% of City of Helena population within ¼ mile of a Checkpoint or East Valley bus stop

Limited hours of service

- Target LOS D: 12-13 hours of service
- Actual LOS E: 11 hours for Checkpoint and 8 hours for East Valley
- No weekend service

⁴ Based on levels of service published in the Transit Capacity and Quality of Service Manual (Kittelson & Associates et.al., 2003)

East Valley route operates for 8 hours, with no weekend service.

Marketing and Bus Stops

The responses to the community survey showed that among non-riders, 66% said they were “unfamiliar with HATS and how to use it” compared to 23% of riders. More significantly, large percentages of both riders (46%) and non-riders (72%) said they “need more information on the service”, and both groups responded even more strongly that “more information about existing services” would be an important factor in influencing them to use HATS more – 62% of riders and 79% of non-riders agreed with this statement and in both cases large percentages strongly agreed.

This is a common weakness of small systems in communities such as Helena. We have seen many bus systems fall far short of their potential because they fail to effectively market their services and provide information to make their systems easy for the public to use. There are many tools HATS could use to address this need, including an improved website and hard copy informational materials, as well as installing bus stop infrastructure.

Creating bus stops is a significant improvement HATS could implement to make the system easier to use and to increase visibility. HATS currently has almost no bus stop infrastructure. Developing and implementing a plan for fixed route bus stop improvements should be a high priority over the next five years. Improvements such as signs, shelters, benches and lighting have high marketing value and are also very important for making the system convenient, comfortable and safe to use.

Opportunity to evolve into a community service

HATS has a great opportunity to evolve into a broader community service while maintaining the important safety net services it is currently providing. Developing services that offer viable transportation options for choice riders will make HATS a more integral and valuable component of the Helena area’s economy and quality of life. Our public outreach showed that there is stakeholder and community support for making this transition. Whatever changes HATS makes, management must ensure that bus service is safe, clean, effective, and reliable.

4.2 Peer communities funding comparison from HITP

The HITP allowed for a deeper assessment of the challenges identified in the TDP, including an updated peer comparison. The Rural National Transit Database was used to compare HATS funding with funding data from 43 peer communities. While the TDP used 2011 National Transit Database (NTD) data, Reporting Year 2012 became available during the HITP. Peer communities were filtered from micropolitan communities with at least 4 of a list of 7 characteristics in common with Helena: county population, core city population, community educational levels, budget, passengers per hour, passengers per mile, or state capital. Communities of similar size with budgets greater than \$8 million were filtered out, as these are predominantly communities



with unique characteristics that do not provide a good comparison – ski towns, national park gateway communities, and communities with major universities. While the 2012 data is cleaner than previous years' Rural NTD data, it is important to note that this is a young database and there is significant subjectivity and inconsistency in how different communities categorize funding sources. As shown in Figure 8 below, our peer analysis showed:

- **Larger Budgets** – On average, the peer communities had a budget of \$2 million compared to \$1.2 million for Helena.
- **Diverse Funding** – Most peer communities have more diverse funding sources than Helena.
- **Farebox** – On average, peer communities' farebox revenue makes up 9% of total revenue, which is in line with Helena's revenue stream.

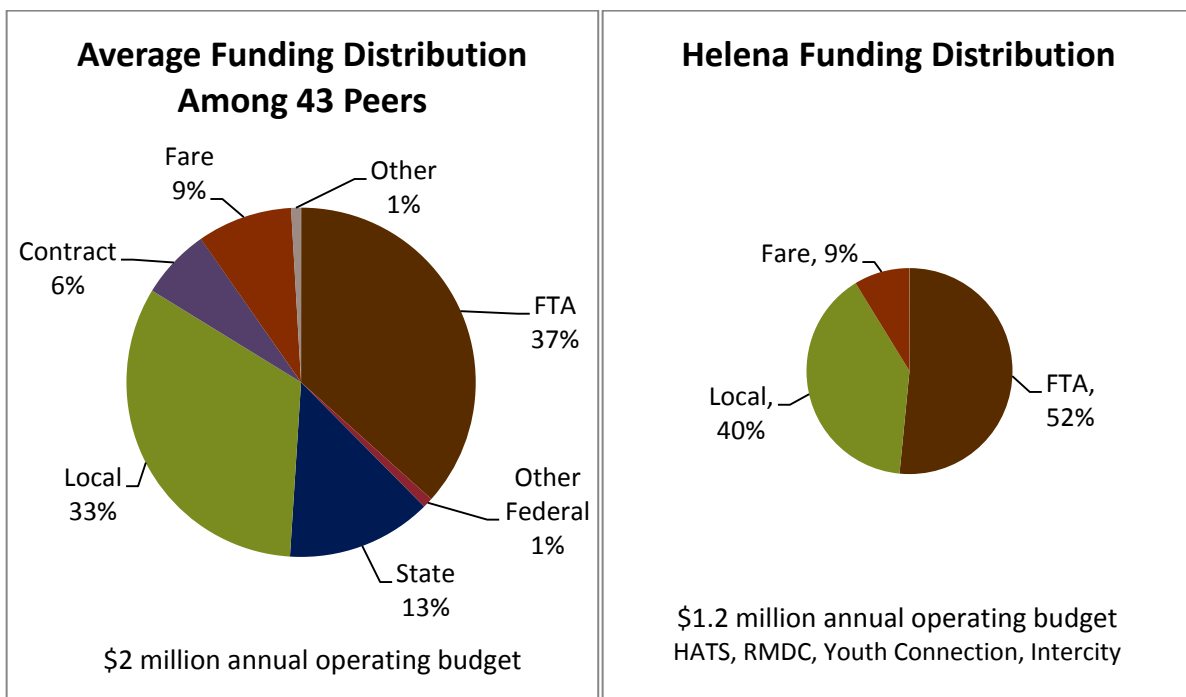


Figure 10: Budgets of Peer Communities are larger and more diverse than Helena

4.3 HTP Stakeholders Reinforce TDP Findings

Consistently, throughout all HTP outreach activities, stakeholders and consumers reinforced the findings of the TDP, identifying significant needs for improved transportation services. In the Helena area, many people with mobility limitations lack adequate transportation to access basic needs such as employment, shopping, childcare, medical services, and education. They also need improved transportation options for independence, quality of life and community involvement, including access to social and faith based activities, recreation and community events such as local government public meetings.

All stakeholder group leaders interviewed identified transportation as a priority for their organizations. Additionally, many identified the rapidly growing senior population as a constituency that will require expanded services in coming years, as reflected in one stakeholder comment:

“Transit is important to all our member organizations and crosses all our issue areas. For a capital city with many human services it is a problem that there is not enough transit service in the city and none in the county.”

Most said HATS’ Curb-to-Curb service is more heavily used and more important than HATS’ Checkpoint route for their members/clients. Checkpoint’s poor on-time performance, long travel times and limited service coverage are all reasons for this current situation. Many also commented that transportation services are most needed from October through May due to icy conditions that impede biking and walking and are a barrier for some senior citizens who are not comfortable driving unless the roads are dry.

Employment

Stakeholders and consumers provided stories and statistics documenting the critical link between transportation services and employment for people with mobility limitations. Many commented that people with mobility limitations often have jobs after 5:00 pm and on weekends. Because no service is currently available at those times, it is not uncommon for people to refuse jobs due to lack of transportation. A typical consumer comment was, “For a person with a mobility limitation to get a job, it must be on the bus line.” Following are several of the best examples offered by participants:

- God’s Love requires clients to get jobs and approximately 80 percent of their clients ride HATS. However, many clients have had to refuse jobs because the bus didn’t run late enough. A typical example is having no transportation home from Walmart in the evening.
- Approximately 70 percent of YMCA residents use HATS. They would love to see the system expanded because many YMCA clients have to combine transit with extensive walking to access jobs. One person has an additional 30 minute walk to work at Costco.
- VA officials at Fort Harrison reported that the lack of transportation options limits their ability to hire veterans with disabilities, or to use volunteers with mobility limitations.

We also collected evidence of the potential value of transit for commuters who are choice riders. One participant who drives stated, “I would use HATS to access the Capital Complex to avoid the hassles of parking and wintry conditions.”



Essential Services

Many participants use HATS to access essential services. These consumers include a cancer patient who has depended on HATS for six years since being diagnosed. Another rider lives at Leisure Village (East Valley), and depends on the bus because he does not have a driver's license. However HATS only has one stop at 1 pm, making it difficult to keep appointments.

Independence and quality of life

Overwhelmingly, people with mobility limitations who participated in the project cited the importance of transportation for their independence, ability to be involved in the community, and overall quality of life. One participant shared the story of their grandmother who "used Curb-to-Curb and wouldn't have been able to live independently without the service." Typical comments included not being able to go to church on Sundays, and a senior citizen who is blind who stated, "I am on lockdown in the evenings and on weekends." Another participant who does not drive said he used to ride the Curb-to-Curb out to the North Valley to visit friends. He would like to see this service return because some of his friends in the North Valley are home bound.

4.4 Improved Customer Service

Consumers and stakeholders who participated in the HITP and TDP said it was difficult to find easy-to-understand, up-to-date information about transit services. They also emphasized the need for staff to be better trained in working with people with disabilities.

Opportunities to address these issues start with a marketing plan to improve customer information through website improvements as well as hard copy materials such as brochures, schedules, and bus stop signs; staff training using resources such as those developed by Easter Seals; and implementing appropriate technology for managing demand response service.

4.5 Appropriate Staffing

To achieve success with the organizational structures described above, several leadership roles need to be filled. Overarching goals of these jobs are to both provide specialized technical assistance while also building the expertise and skills of existing HATS staff, TAC members and the staff and leaders of key partner stakeholder organizations. The experience of communities around the nation with successful transit systems is that it is critical to clearly define job responsibilities, and to match those responsibilities with people who have strong professional qualifications for the needed skill sets. The people who are hired must also have adequate time, resources and authority to achieve the desired goals.

4.6 Funding

Throughout the HITP project, stakeholders identified improved funding as a high priority need. Specifically, in order to meet the transportation needs identified in the Helena area, it will be necessary to increase funding diversity, sustainability, and overall funding levels for transportation services.

A variety of potential funding sources could help improve and expand transportation services. While some could be developed in the short term, others would require longer term strategies. Potential short term sources include contracts for services with human service agencies; investments from partners such as large employers, downtown businesses and Carroll College; and contributions from local government. If stakeholders collaborate to build a funding advocacy campaign, within five years it could be possible to achieve an urban transit district (UTD) mil levy and/or other tax or fee-based dedicated funding that could replace and expand local government general fund contributions. A bigger challenge would be helping to build a statewide collaborative effort to secure a state level funding source such as exists in most other states.

4.7 Non-Motorized Transportation

Walking and biking information for current HATS riders was collected through the TDP rider survey and stakeholder involvement in the HITP. It is summarized in Section 7.2 of the TDP. Stakeholders indicated that safe pedestrian access to bus stops is a high priority because the majority of riders walk to access the bus. A much smaller percentage ride bikes to access the bus. The quality of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure varies greatly throughout the community. There are many opportunities to improve this infrastructure and coordinate these improvements with the installation of bus stop infrastructure.

The 2011 Growth Policy includes a good summary of pedestrian and bicycle issues. A large number of public comments received during the Growth Policy development process indicated a strong need for better pedestrian connectivity throughout the city, 'complete streets', and elimination of major pedestrian barriers. The need to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment (with amenities, traffic calming, and safer intersections) also has been extensively noted by the public. The input indicated the need to install more sidewalks, incorporating accessible design, maintenance of existing infrastructure and seasonal maintenance to ensure that all facilities are useable throughout the year. This maintenance is especially important for mobility for the elderly and persons with a disability. The City has utilized traffic calming devices such as traffic circles, bulb-outs, and speed dips on local streets to reduce motor vehicle traffic speeds and traffic cutting through neighborhoods. In addition, Helena's network of pedestrian/bicycle paths has been expanded significantly in the past ten years.

4.8 Coordination and mobility management

One outcome of HITP Round 1 was to focus on improved mobility management. Providing a coordinated, efficient transportation system requires great expertise in navigating through the complicated network of federal transportation funding sources and regulations, and applying this understanding to the web of community partners and needs. In 2004 the Congressional Office of Management and Budget identified 62 federal programs that have transportation funding programs for the human service portion of community transportation. The spaghetti



diagram in Figure 9 shows these programs, updated to include livability programs and other program changes. Layered onto the federal funding sources are the state and local governments, the transportation providers, and the supporting social services.

While this great range of human service programs offers a variety of opportunities to provide transportation options for people with mobility limitations, the person looking for a ride and the organizations offering rides can get lost in the complexity of navigating this network of often overlapping programs. In communities with poor coordination and a lack of expertise and the staffing resources to tackle this challenge, the result is typically low funding levels and missed opportunities, with duplicated transportation services in some areas and no service and limited hours in other areas.

Stakeholders felt that while some good communication has taken place, little substantive collaboration has yet been achieved – so far stakeholders have been talking but not doing. A mobility management approach to coordination offers the best opportunity to leverage existing resources and to improve and expand transportation options. Mobility management is strongly customer focused and includes the following components:

- Qualified, professional mobility management staff coordinate public transportation and human service transportation.
- Technology is implemented to help improve efficiency, communication and transit management capability. Technology must be carefully planned and tailored to meet a community's specific needs.
- Transportation services are easy and enjoyable to use because they are convenient and because effective marketing ensures that it is easy for customers to find high quality, up-to-date information about transportation options.
- Creative, broad-based funding strategies are developed, including public-private partnerships, and strong community support and local funding that leverages federal and state funding.
- Mobility managers and transit stakeholders are engaged in local and regional planning efforts to ensure sustainable, transit oriented community design and growth patterns, as well as implementation of transportation demand management strategies.

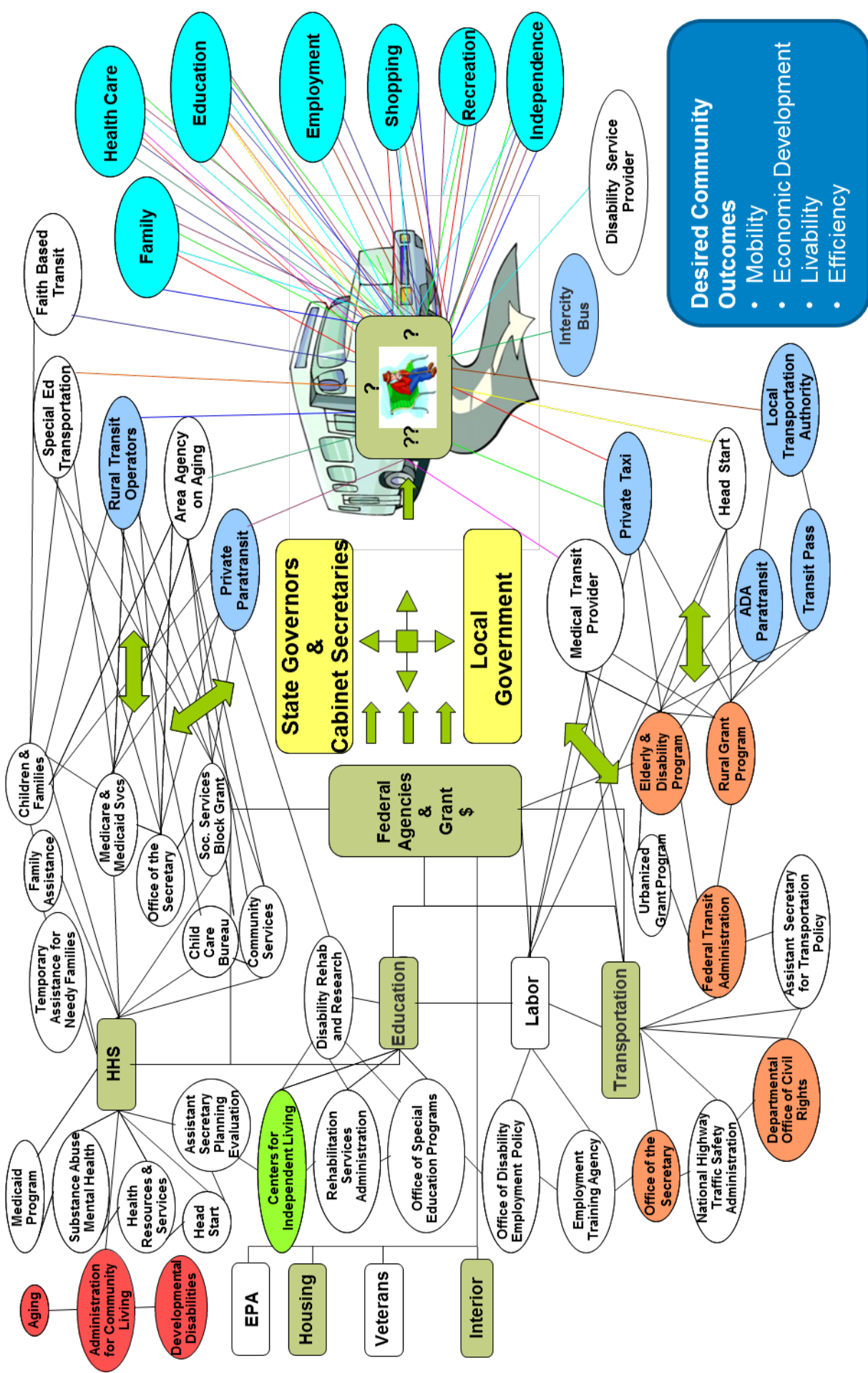


Figure 11: A complex network of federal funding sources.

Adapted from United We Ride

5 Public Involvement

5.1 Ongoing Public Participation Practices

Public notice for all HTAC meetings is posted on the city website and in the Helena Independent Record prior to meetings. Staff, HTAC members, and consultants also have given presentations on HATS' status to the City of Helena Commission and the Lewis and Clark County Commission. The coordination plan has been discussed at HTAC meetings and the City of Helena Commission. Over the past year, the TDP and the Helena Area Inclusive Transit Planning Grant have had strong public involvement, and all goals are derived from those efforts. Over the next year, HTAC would like to achieve a higher level of substantive collaboration between HATS, stakeholders and consumers. Their goal is to for frequently achieve the "collaborate" level of public participation discussed in Section 5.2 below. Upcoming opportunities for improved public participation include the Helena Area Transportation Plan and implementation of the new five-year Transit Development Plan action steps.



Figure 12: HATS Director Steve Larson speaking at Community Roundtable Event.

Photo: Eliza Wiley/ Independent Record

5.2 Best Practices

Through the 2013 inclusive planning project, the Helena community was able to focus on improved public participation. Project research identified the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) as a resource for best practices. On the IAP2 Spectrum of Participation, shown on the following page, stakeholders and consumers said they felt that the level of inclusiveness currently being achieved is generally at the "inform" level. Best practice in public participation usually targets the "collaborate" level.

- **Inform:** To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions
- **Consult:** To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
- **Involve:** To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

- **Collaborate:** To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
- **Empower:** To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



International Association
for Public Participation

Increasing Level of Public Impact

Public participation goal

Inform

To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

Consult

To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

Involve

To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

Collaborate

To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

Empower

To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

Promise to the public

We will keep you informed.

We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.

We will implement what you decide.

Example techniques

- Fact sheets
- Web sites
- Open houses

- Public comment
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Public meetings

- Workshops
- Deliberative polling

- Citizen advisory committees
- Consensus-building
- Participatory decision-making

- Citizen juries
- Ballots
- Delegated decision

5.3 Stakeholder and Consumer Participation in Inclusive Planning Grant

A central focus of the inclusive planning project was to conduct extensive, targeted stakeholder outreach in order to develop a deeper understanding of the transportation needs of people with mobility limitations, and to collect stakeholder-generated suggestions for addressing those needs. The HITP project began with a contact list of 30 people representing 15 stakeholder organizations, many of whom had little or no prior involvement in transit planning. By the end of the project the contact list had nearly 380 stakeholders and consumers, representing over 30 organizations. All of these contacts received at least three touches through email or phone calls. Approximately 110 of these contacts signed in at one or more of the project outreach activities, and we estimate that approximately 100 additional participants did not include their names on event sign-in sheets. These numbers reflect the significant, widespread need for improved transportation services among people with mobility limitations, and a correspondingly huge, and previously untapped, desire to be involved in transit planning.

Nearly all outreach activities significantly exceeded grant targets. Stakeholders and consumers were included through three Working Group meetings, 18 in-depth stakeholder interviews, eight small group consumer meetings, and five broader community meetings. It is important to note that the project team had to pass up a number of promising stakeholder and consumer outreach opportunities because of time and funding limitations.

Working Group – The project Working Group is a core group of key stakeholders who met three times at the transit system conference room on weekday afternoons prior to monthly Transportation Advisory Council (TAC) meetings. Working Group members developed a mission statement and rules of procedure. They also provided guidance and feedback on grant activities. There are now 20 stakeholder organization representatives on the working group invitation list. Following the third working group meeting, attendance at the TAC meeting was at the highest level in recent memory, with 13 of 20 working group members attending that meeting. Following completion of the planned grant activities, two additional working group meetings were held in late 2012 to discuss and plan next steps.

Stakeholder Interviews – Stakeholder interviews were conducted to assess transportation needs; organizational transportation priorities; tap into stakeholders' knowledge base for general guidance; collect suggestions for inclusive planning and improved transportation services; and explore interest in engaging in additional inclusive planning activities such as forming a coalition of stakeholder organizations. The project team built a contact list of community group leaders representing seniors, people with disabilities and others with knowledge of transportation issues in Helena. From this list, 29 group leaders were contacted to identify 10 priority interview subjects. The list grew significantly as participants recommended interviewing additional community leaders. A total of 18 interviews were conducted, lasting approximately one-hour each. In total there were 31 participants.

Small Group Meetings – The project team and Working Group identified 14 meeting opportunities of which 8 were prioritized. Team members worked with stakeholder group representatives to finalize meeting dates, times, and the preferred format for each meeting. In total, over 170 consumers and organizational support staff attended these meetings.

Community Meetings – In addition to the two community meetings originally planned in the grant scope, the project team also took advantage of important opportunities for three additional wrap-up meetings with broad-based groups of key stakeholders. In total there were approximately 130 participants in these five meetings. The two planned grant activities were a community roundtable event and a project presentation with public comment before the Lewis and Clark County Commissioners. The roundtable event was the most important event and was attended by 55 consumers and representatives of stakeholder organizations. It included a presentation of project findings and a video we created of consumers with mobility limitations telling their personal stories about the importance of transit, followed by 1.5 hours of in-depth discussion of needs, suggestions and next steps. At this meeting a number of key stakeholders made commitments to play key roles in important action steps moving forward.



6 Private Sector

Private providers include G&L Transit, Capitol Taxi, First Student, and the Helena airport.

Charter Bus Service

G&L Transit is a charter bus company based out of Helena/Lewis and Clark County and Butte. G&L serves the continental United States from the two base locations. Its major clients are the U.S. Government (military personnel in particular) and the State of Montana. Other than a fixed schedule service for local government adult special needs clients, its service is available 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. (City of Helena, 2011)

Capitol Taxi

Capitol Taxi (formerly Old Trapper Taxi) is currently the sole taxi company operating in the Helena City and Valley. Capitol Taxi provides door-to-door demand-response service 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. The service area for passenger transport is defined as the area within a 50-mile road radius from the Federal Building in downtown Helena.

The taxi has a base in-town fare of \$10.00 for the core of Helena south of the Burlington Northern Railroad. In other parts of the valley, the base fare ranges from \$10.00 to \$32.00. Additional fares are added to the base depending on the number of zones crossed.

Capitol Taxi maintains a fleet of four cars. Except for peak wintertimes only three cars are used on a regular basis. Two cars run during weekday afternoons.

Capitol Taxi reported in a letter to the Helena City Commission in 2013 approximately 40 to 60 trips per day, including work trips, trips for seniors and people with disabilities, and service to the airport. Capital Taxi has reported to the Helena Area Transportation Advisory Council 80 to 100 rides for 2013 and 2012, and 160 to 175 rides in 2011. All the taxis are self-dispatched through the use of two-way radios. Trips are scheduled on an as-need basis, with typical wait times of between 10 and 15 minutes.

Helena Area Regional Airport

The Helena Area Regional Airport is located within the City of Helena, in the community's northeast corner, three miles from the HATS Transit Center. Passenger service is provided by regional airlines services such as Horizon/Alaska Airlines, Skywest/Delta and United Express with approximately 424 seats available for departing air traffic each day. Air passenger and air freight traffic have been steady for several years. The airport is governed by the Airport Authority Board, made up of members appointed by the City of Helena and Lewis and Clark County commissioners. (City of Helena, 2011) HATS does not provide airport service.



Amtrak

No passenger rail services are currently available in the Helena area. The nearest passenger rail service to Helena is the Amtrak station in Shelby, 167 miles to the north. The service has one departure in each direction four times per week.

First Student

First Student is the contractor operating school bus service for Helena School Districts 1 and 2.

6.1 Involvement from the Private Sector outside of providers

Involvement from the private sector over the past year is primarily in the form of purchase of tokens and input during planning activities. During those opportunities, private sector entities offered valuable input and ideas regarding system efficiency, better marketing and creative funding ideas. In FY 2015 HATC will continue to foster a higher level of engagement from these valuable private sector entities concerning all public transportation activities in the community.

7 Plan for Growth and Increased Ridership

Ridership needs to be addressed because it has been on a downward trend in spite of extensive stakeholder and public comment indicating a significant need for HATS' services, including significant unmet needs. Goals, objectives, and activities described in Chapter 1 are designed to increase the quality of service and to increase ridership. In summary, the following activities should increase ridership:

- Better coordination and mobility management
- Improved public participation
- Improved on-time performance
- Shifting existing resources from demand response to fixed route service and reconfiguring fixed route service to increase efficiency and service quality.
- Increased funding for new service
 - New route
 - Saturday service
 - Longer hours
- A marketing plan
- Improved and better marked bus stops

The following Program Outcome Model summarizes proposed outcomes for Phase 2 of the Inclusive Planning Grant. A grant application has been submitted for Phase 2, but no response has yet been received from the funder.

The Program Outcome Model summarizes HITP activities that HTAC would like to take on in the next year⁵. More will be able to be done if the grant is received, but regardless, HTAC is committed to use this as a roadmap to improve transportation services in the Helena area over the next year and continuing beyond. How much can be done will be subject to funding.

The HTAC will continue to work through Year 1 activities, and anything that can't be accomplished in Year 1 will shift to Year 2.

⁵ In addition HTAC will work on TDP goals, objectives, and activities.



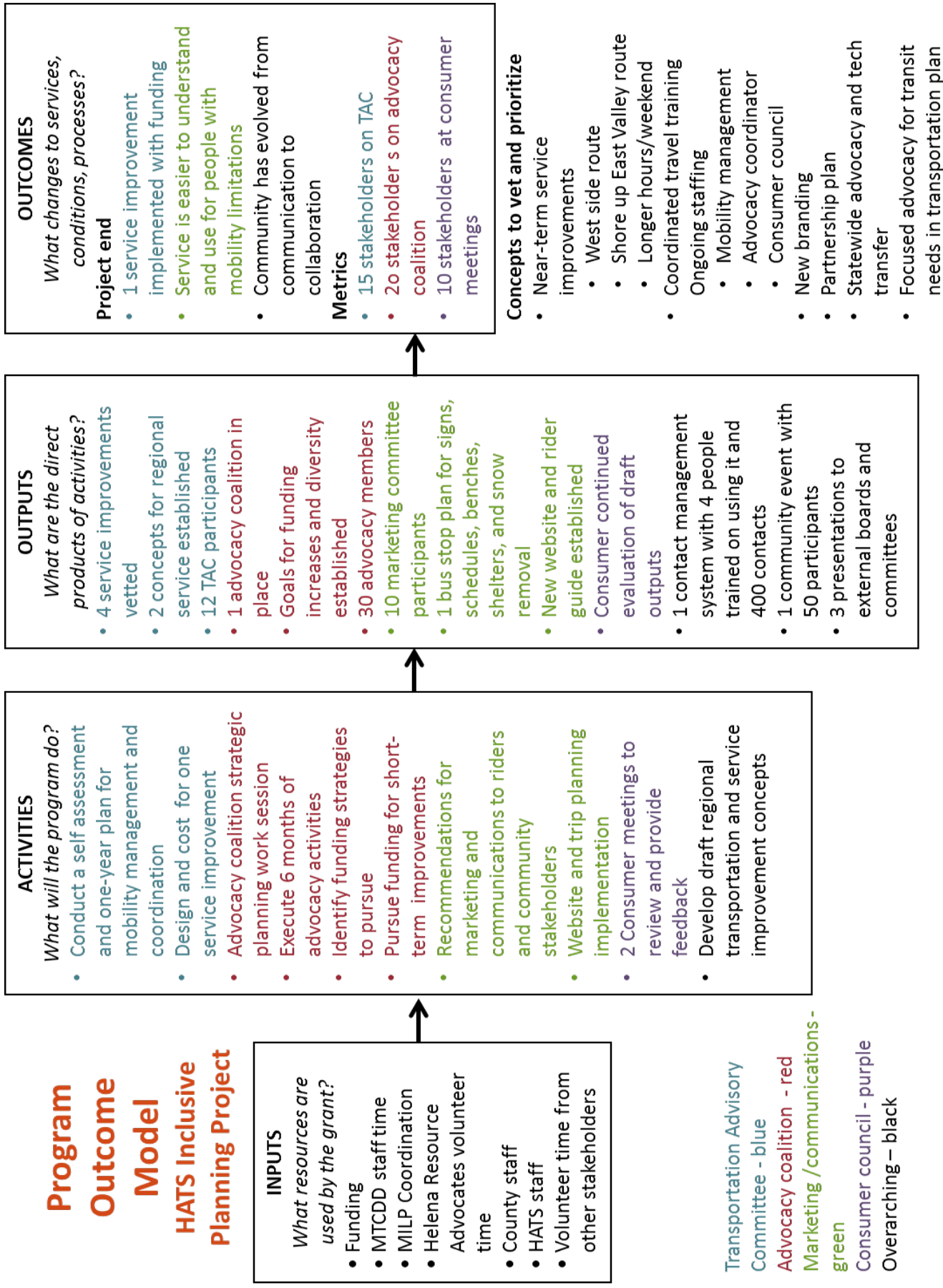


Figure 13: Project Outcome

8 Helena Transportation Advisory Council (HTAC)

HTAC is made up of representatives of public transportation providers; human-service agencies providing services to the elderly, individuals with disabilities, low income people, and minority groups; as well as existing or potential riders from the general public and targeted population passengers. Its members are listed in the following chapter.

The draft Coordination Plan was developed and approved by the HTAC Coordination Plan Subcommittee, then reviewed and approved by HTAC active members on January 29, 2014. The draft plan was then included in the City Commission Administrative Meeting materials packet for their review during the February 5th Administrative Meeting. The following FY 2015 Capital projects were approved through a ballot process approved by HTAC:

#1	27 Passenger ADA Accessible Bus	Agency-HATS
#2	5 Passenger Van ADA Accessible	Agency-West Mont
#3	6 Bus Shelters	Agency-HATS
#4	12 Passenger ADA Bus	Agency-West Mont
#5	5 Passenger Van ADA Accessible	Agency-MILP
#6	5 Passenger Van ADA Accessible	Agency-West Mont
#7	6 Passenger Mini Van	Agency-West Mont

The final FY 2015 Helena Coordination Plan, including the Capital request ranking, was e-mailed to voting members for approval on February 21, 2014. On February 24th the approved final FY 2015 Helena Coordination Plan was passed to the City of Helena.

HTAC members serve at will and the officers have 1 year terms. Officers are eligible for reelection and may serve multiple terms.

HTAC is one of three committees involved with public transportation in Helena. The other committees are the Intergovernmental Transit Advisory Committee (IGTC) and the Transportation Coordinating Committee.

8.1 Related Committees and Boards

Besides the HTAC, four other committees/boards are directly involved in public transportation. These are described below.



City of Helena

The Helena City Commission is responsible for oversight of the Helena Area Transit System and has final decision-making authority for HATS service.

Intergovernmental Transit Committee (IGTC)

The Intergovernmental Transit Committee was established by resolution in 2007 to review the Transit Development Plan and make recommendations to the City Commission. The committee meets quarterly and is comprised of, but not limited to the following individuals:

- The Helena Transit Manager
- One (1) City Commission Member
- One (1) County Commissioner
- One (1) East Helena City Commissioner
- One (1) representative from Rocky Mountain Development Council
- One (1) representative from the Helena Area Transit Council
- One (1) representative from the Helena Neighborhood Project
- One (1) representative user of the transit system

This committee was tasked with making recommendations to the City Commission for a range of service level options and sustainable funding sources; and the committee members serve term of three (3) years after appointment by the Mayor.

Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC)

This committee manages the executive business of the Helena Urban Area Transportation Plan Update. The Committee works closely with the City, County, and State to develop and keep current urban transportation planning, design and construction in the Helena area. The committee adopts and recommends implementation of long and short-range transportation programs for the Helena urban area. The committee transmits all reports and recommendations related to the continuing transportation planning for the urban area to the various agencies for final adoption and implementation. Members are: 2 City Commission members, 2 County Commission members, 1 Montana Highway Department Representative, 1 Federal Highway Administration Representative, 1 Helena Citizens Council, 1 Planning Board, 1 City Staff Contact, 1 County resident and 2 City residents (1 City resident is a non-voting member). The citizen members of the TCC shall be appointed for terms of two-years.

Non-motorized Transportation Advisory Council (NMTAC)

The general purpose of the council is to advise the City Commission on pedestrian and bicycle related issues. The Council may have up to seven citizen as voting members, one Helena City Commissioner and one Helena Citizen's Council representative. Members' terms are three-years.

8.2 Proposed HTAC Rules of Procedure

For the Inclusive Planning Grant, the national project sponsors tasked the local project working group to develop rules of engagement, which follows. These were developed specifically for this project but with the possibility of adaption to follow-up work. For the coming year, HTAC will help update the Helena Area Stakeholders' Rules of Procedure.

The following rules of procedure were developed for the Inclusive Planning Grant.

Who should be included?

The working group is open to participation by any organizations that represent or serve people with mobility limitations including seniors, adults and children with physical and cognitive disabilities who cannot drive to access work, educational, social and recreational opportunities, and essential services like health care. Overall, the efforts of this project should be inclusive and work to engage a broad range of people who need transportation assistance. Recommendations that are developed to improve transit service should consider needs and benefits for choice riders whenever possible, so that all residents will benefit and service changes will not segregate people with mobility limitations from the rest of the population.

How will communication be handled?

The project team will email working group members requesting comments and recommendations on the following: interviews, invitation lists for activities, meeting agendas, notes from interviews and activities, and the draft of the final project report. Because of the project's compressed timeline, responses will need to be received quickly in order to be incorporated. The project team will specify deadlines for comment whenever it sends communications.

How will decisions be made?

The working group's goal is whenever possible to find consensus on outreach approaches and inclusive planning recommendations. The group is working towards building a coalition and decision-making rules will be revisited as part of the coalition-building process. At this stage, for all grant activities, to the extent possible given limited funding and time constraints, the project team will actively seek input from working group members about the highest priority stakeholders to target, and outreach strategies that will include a broad cross-section of people with mobility limitations. Proposed inclusive planning recommendations will be circulated to the working group at least a week prior to the final project meeting and all written comments from stakeholder organizations will be included in the final report. If there is not consensus on specific recommendations, the report should clearly explain which organizations supported or disagreed and the basis for their different positions.

How will working group members continue to work together following completion of the grant process?



The working group will continue to work with the county Grants Administrator and the HATS Supervisor to develop a proposal for the next round of Transit Planning for All grants. If the county succeeds in securing another inclusive planning grant, the working group will continue to work with the project team to guide the grant process. If the county's grant application is not successful, the working group will meet to discuss whether it should continue to play a role in helping stakeholders implement the next steps identified through the 2013 inclusive planning grant.

9 Transportation Advisory Council Members

The following table lists community members who have actively participated in the HTAC and the Inclusive Transit Planning Grant project over the last year. This list includes consumers and/or representatives from all agencies either receiving service, financially supporting the program, and/or agencies participating in this Coordination Plan. Officers are indicated in the third column. The fourth column indicates members who have met the requirements of the HTAC bylaws for active participation. The fifth column shows the members who have a membership form on file. The last column indicates participants who were on the inclusive planning workgroup contact list.

Table 12: TAC Participants

Name	Organization	2012 HTAC/TCP?	HTAC Members as per By-laws	Project Workgroup
Robert Allen	HATS TAC		X	
Cyndy Baril	RMDC - Senior Companion Program		X	X
Charlie Briggs	Easter Seals-Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and Utah			X
Cathy Burwell	Helena Chamber of Commerce			X
Les Clark	MILP - MT Independent Living Project		X	X
Jeanette Clark	Center for Mental Health	Yes	X	
Vivian Crabtree	MAB - MT Association for the Blind		X	X
Jennie Ekwortze	RMDC Senior Companion		X	
Matt Elsaesser	City of Helena			X
Arlene Flynn	WestMont			X
Walter Hanley	RMDC - Rocky Mountain Development Council Home Delivered Meals/HATS Advisory Board/IGTC	Yes	X	X
Judy Harris	Helena TAC		X	
Andy Hunthausen	L&C County Commission/IGTC			X
Brian Johnson	United Way of the Lewis and Clark Area	Yes	X	
Paul Kindt	PEERS		X	
Karen Lane	Lewis and Clark City-County Health Department		X	
Saundra Lowry	Area IV Agency on Aging, RMDC		X	X
Bob Maffit	MILP - MT Independent Living Project/IGTC		X	X
Greg Olsen	Helena Industries, Helena Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Council	Yes	X	X
Susan Pesta	West Mont	Yes	X	X
Melanie Reynolds	L&C City-County Board of Health			X
Patrick Sanders	DPHHS-Disability Employment Transitions	Yes	X	
Barb Sheridan	HATS TAC	Yes	X	X
Kim Sickerson	The Friendship Center		X	



Name	Organization	2012 HTAC/TCP?	HTAC Members as per By-laws	Project Workgroup
Carole Solomon	YWCA			X
Lloyd Sparks	MILP - MT Independent Living Project			X
Peggy Stebbins	St. Pete's Hospital			X
Deborah Swingley	Montana Council of Developmental Disabilities		X	X
David Thurnstrom	Veterans Transportation Service			X
Roger Trumper	Veterans-VA			X
Elizabeth Andrews	HTAC		X	X
Matthew Cramer	SAVE Foundation, Americorps Vista			X
Laura Erikson	Lewis and Clark County			X
Steve Larson	City of Helena		X	X
Ron Mercer	Helena Regional Airport	No		
LT. Tiffany Vawler	The Salvation Army	No		
Amy Tenney	Helena Prerelease Center	Yes	X	
Freyja Bell	First Judicial District Treatment Court	Yes	X	
Mike Hruska	Capital Taxi/Rent a Wreck	Yes	X	
Deborah Chouinard	Helena Job Service	Yes	X	
Daniel Kohl	Montana VAVS Representative		X	
Rachel Puera	ADA Committee		X	
Ann Waikman	Helena Food Share		X	
Peter McKinley	Montana Association for the Blind		X	